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THE BOOKMAN

JOHN FARRAR, *Editor*

THE POINT OF VIEW

THE LIMIT OF TOLERANCE

A NEW YORK critic rose to his feet in anger at the second night of a current Broadway revue and astonished the house manager by demanding that the performance be stopped. The manager thought him either intoxicated or insane or both. The entertainment was not salacious and the ladies of the chorus were, within reason, clothed. New York is a godless town and few sympathized with this quixotic tilting at windmills. To laugh at sex is permissible. Is it yet good taste to burlesque religion? The finale of this review is a jazz rendition of the child's prayer, "Now I lay me down to sleep." The fair dancers of the piece seek their beds with mock prayer. Is there no one left to fight blasphemy?

The pacifists battle for pacifism yet they preach tolerance. The forces of tolerance fought Mr. Bryan, believing him to have fostered legal intolerance of the freedom of ideas. Christianity, the religion of tolerance, has in every age produced churches and priests militant. Societies for the prevention of vice fight for purity; yet the tolerant, believing presumably in moral standards, fight again for freedom of individual expression. At what point may the tolerant man become intolerant? At what point may the public refuse to accept the product of publishers, dramatists, artists and others who present wares for their consumption; refuse, and still be known as enlightened? An individual may become so tolerant that he is little more than a jellyfish. A public may become so tolerant that it is degenerate. If the interests of art are at stake the discussion becomes more complicated, but the issue should remain clear. Even the noble doctrine of art for art's sake must give way before the necessity for preserving the integrity of the human soul.

Messrs. Belasco and Brady at their vulgar worst this season have not been guilty of blasphemy in the deeper sense. It is one thing for a character to swear across the footlights. It is another for a bevy of show girls to snigger and curl their legs around prayer. A nation must have gods, be they those of Bryan, Fosdick, Wise, or Manning. The hu-

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man soul is nourished by prayer, by whatever name such contemplation is called, and if we deride a child's prayer known to millions from a stage viewed by thousands, it is time for someone to shout, "Halt!"

Don Quixote fought for vanishing romance. The Christian martyrs died for love as represented by the Son of God. Is it ridiculous to raise banners to fight for reverence, and to blow trumpets for an army to champion good taste? Or is this, too, intolerance?

THIS MEANS A LOT IN THE MIDDLE WEST

A YOUNG man from St. Louis emerged from a New York bookstore bearing a large volume. He pointed to the jacket. It carried one of those snobbish blurbs which make the volume and its publisher seem like purveyors of special, exotic and highly rarified perfume. "This means a lot in the middle west!" he remarked.

Does it? Is the middle west or the far west or the south or the northwest any more cursed by intellectual snobbery than the portals of the Hotel Algonquin or the Players Club? Publishers have found, simply, that one way to sell books is to make people think it is *chic* to have them. Certain publishers have established lines of goods which they jacket and case much as do the manufacturers of high priced bonbons, manufacturers who would much prefer to be termed *creators*. These publishers do not cater to the middle west any more than they do to Fifth Avenue. In all parts of the country are those who do not need to be told what they are to be snobbish about, those who must learn, and those who are no snobs at all. As long as they read the books they buy, what difference does it make? Does it make any great difference if they don't read them? Possibly if they leave them on their library tables long enough, their servants will read them!

The only discoverable difference in the attitude of various parts of the country toward books is a difference in eagerness. The middle west is far more eager than Boston, for example, or yet again than Philadelphia. It reads, perhaps, with more seriousness the current product. It is quicker to find points of discussion. It is more willing to admit a new reputation to the ranks. This proves, doesn't it, that it is less snobbish. We must not malign the book buyers of St. Louis or let them malign themselves; for one can meet quite as many intellectual snobs on Beacon Street as on the banks of the Mississippi.

WHEN IS A DRIVE NOT A DRIVE?

GOVERNOR LEONARD WOOD of the Philippine Islands does not believe in great drives for the raising of money, — conventional ones, at least. Yet he is undertaking to raise a million dollars for the support of the leper colony at Culion, two hundred miles south of Manila on the edge of the China Sea. He believes in the power of the press minus the usual committees and ballyhoos employed by most charitable organizations for the gathering of funds. So he sent to America recently one charming lady, a doctor's wife, the only white woman resident of this huge and appalling settlement of the diseased. Her instructions were to interview the editors of America and to interest them in her project. The

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prediction that no campaign of recent years will exceed this of General Wood's in point of space accorded it by the magazines is not only a tribute to the publicist governor's perspicacity but a recognition of the worth of his cause. Vast strides are being made on the island in the interests of science, and the measures for prevention and cure being discovered there will be of use to mankind in handling not only leprosy but other diseases, including tuberculosis. Aid for this colony means, therefore, not only assistance for pitiful and terrifying individual cases but for the world at large.

During the war we resorted to the most elaborate means for raising money. While our troops were fighting at the front, Douglas Fairbanks rode down Fifth Avenue in New York City, on an elephant, to fill the coffers of righteousness. This fever heat of propaganda has never quite subsided and it often becomes necessary to tickle several of our jaded appetites before it is possible to loosen our purse strings. So dignified a procedure as that of the governor of the Philippines and his able assistant should meet with our earnest coöperation. The press welcomes his discretion, and the public will undoubtedly respond. Contributions of any size will be accepted by the Bureau of Insular Affairs, the War Department, Washington, D. C.

FORM AND BEAUTY

THE "American Mercury", curiously enough, published some months past an excellent discussion by John McClure on "The Domination of Literature". The paper is, in effect, a defense of formal beauty. "The menace to the formal arts today", he writes, "is the effort that is being made to establish literary significance *as the essence of form.*" This is true in music, in painting, in writing — especially, perhaps, in the writing of poetry. Already, however, the reaction is setting in. The public never really liked free verse nor can it ever really be educated to enjoy the most modern of the composers, although that this is a fact will be roundly denied by many.

Life is in itself formal. It is governed by rhythm. The appreciation of beauty in form is immediate and satisfying. A beautiful body, a Greek vase, a rhythmical poem: these produce an effect of aesthetic satisfaction. When expressionism enters in, the mind must be brought to bear on the picture or song. Curiosity and an effort to interpret take the place of pure appreciation.

More and more in America we are coming to realize that form matters. How a thing is made is important. A scientific invention faultily executed is no more tragic than a great artistic idea developed with faulty technique. The novel and the poem, confined so long within well defined limits, have had their debauch of formlessness and are coming back to sobriety. Mr. McClure in his article was pessimistic about the present and the future status of the arts. His difficulty seems to be that he has taken a present mood for a permanent obsession. His excellent closing paragraph follows: "Those of us who cherish formal beauty cannot but regret the effort to discredit it. Is there, after all, any need to destroy form because we admire symbol? Is there any need to say that expressionism in painting is the same thing as the formal beauty of the fine art of painting? Is there any need to say that the magnificent imagery of Carlyle is the same thing as a Latin harmony?

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That Whitman's catalogues are the same product of the human spirit as Milton's blank verse, Scottish ballads, Elizabethan lyrics, or Whitman's own splendidly formal rhythms at their best?"

OUR VANISHING LEISURE

LIFE no longer gives us generously time for recreation, and recreation itself has become so highly organized that it can scarcely be called leisure. Civilization is making more and more encroachments on the hours for peace and thought; the average man finds himself with, at best, three or four hours of actual play time each day. This play time is valuable not only to him. It is of value to those who manufacture the things which fill it for him. Radio, phonograph, drama, motor, books — hundreds of articles must be sold to fill those precious free moments of the working day. National advertisers cover the road signs, the sky signs, the street-car signs with flaming paragraphs in the effort to claim us for their own. Who will win us? Will it be the motion picture, the radio, books? Shall we allow ourselves to become the victims of a conspiracy to put an end to thinking? Is not contemplation almost a divine right of intelligent manhood?

Take the radio. Is there any more pernicious influence to dawdling, quite apart from its supposed educational significance? It is always with us when leisure becomes boring, when we are afraid to face our own thoughts and must have mechanical means for stimulating the mind. Would Marcus Aurelius ever have meditated if he could have turned a knob and heard the political harangues of the day? He would probably have thought aloud at a broadcasting station. How deliberately our mechanical inventions inflame the mind. Will we forget to rest? Will we forget even to read? Even if these mechanical aids to thought and learning tend to increase the desire for books, will they leave us energy and time to indulge the desire?

Already we are being asked to organize this precious leisure, and indeed we must if we are to survive. Yet in the very act of organizing for self improvement our real leisure escapes us; we face the empty hour with a schedule based on some formula based on someone's advertising of something calculated to produce in us success in some form. If we can still pray, let us pray for simplification. Let us pray for the willingness to be idle. This editorial can be closed only with a paradox; for as we urge thought and contemplation, we must phrase it as a slogan: "Organize for Thinking Time".

THE RIGHT TO BOOKS

THE New York "Evening Journal" recently carried, at the head of a feature editorial, the new poster designed by Rockwell Kent for the National Publishers' Association. It is a portrait of a man, alone in a cabin, reading. "How much of your time do you spend in this way, reading?" the editorial asked of its huge polyglot public. "Answer that question and you answer another question, 'How much will you amount to mentally twenty years from now?'"

BOOKMAN readers do not need this crisp editorial statement of fact designed for the masses. At any rate, it is to be assumed that they do not.

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Perhaps, however, they fail to realize the need for propaganda about books and reading in this country, a propaganda that is far more important than many another carried on by huge organizations with enormous sums of money at their command.

The public has a right to books, and not only a right to them but a right to be educated to know that it has that right and must exercize it. The National Publishers' Association has been carrying on this work with vigor and accomplishment. They deserve the highest praise, for it is apparent that their campaigns of publicity as well as their more practical efforts, have borne fruit. We are, in America, reading more than in years gone by. During the past five years the demands for printed matter have greatly increased. The motion picture, instead of stopping reading, has, in the opinion of many, stimulated a new type of man to seek books, and, for the purposes of the present, it does not greatly matter what sort of book he seeks so long as he is on the way toward developing the reading habit. It is an indication that organizations are alive to the need for increased interest in reading that the Workers' Education Bureau of America has just levied a tax on every member of every labor union in the country for use in the promotion of reading and the preparation of bibliographies.

Last year Willa Cather, the novelist, gave out an interview in which she intimated that she believed that the more the general public read books, the poorer would be the quality of the books produced. Art, she maintained, was the privilege of aristocracies. Let the aristocrats take care of art, then, but let those who are honestly interested in raising the level of public intelligence buy books, read books, preach books, give away books. It is not only the pockets of the publishers that will be filled from such a proceeding. The manufacturers of toothbrushes may have become wealthy through their great campaigns for mouth sanitation. No one will deny their great service to public health. America has long led in bodily health measures. The health of the mind should be our next concern.

Beginning in the October number of THE BOOKMAN, Jesse Lee Bennett will discuss the relation of books to American life and to adult education. His articles with their shocking statistics may seem pessimistic. They discuss facts as they are, without relation to facts as they were. The dissemination of book knowledge has increased; but the actual number of books owned by the American family is still astoundingly small. If the prominent persons of every community would earnestly consider ways and means for educating their own members toward the desire to develop a personal library it would be of inestimable value to the country. If the gentleman who writes to THE BOOKMAN defending the intelligence of Rotarians could tell me that those worthy clubs had organized a league for the increase of book owners, we should be inclined to defend them against all comers. Meanwhile, editors, publishers, teachers, preachers, and all who really love books should join the National Association of Book Publishers in their efforts (to use the terms of advertisers of other wares) to make the American public book conscious.

GIVING THE LIE TO THE ENGLISH CRITICS

THE editor of one of our American literary monthlies recently told one of his contributors to spend the

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entire summer working on an essay or a piece of criticism. "Polish it", he wrote. "We must have literature and not merely journalism about literature, so that we may give the lie to our English critics."

This matter of the English critics is somewhat overstressed in the minds of some Americans. If he means J. C. Squire, whose article on Amy Lowell in a recent number of his "The London Mercury" was little short of blackguardly, we need scarcely cavil. If he means that there is no journalistic criticism of books in England, he is sadly misinformed; for there are a half dozen popular sheets which deal with literature in a manner far more popular than is used by any of our own reviews. Only a very little real criticism is produced in any country during any given century. America has her share of fine criticism. She has Sherman, More, Perry, Mencken and a score of others.

Then, too, it is only a small group of English pundits who find us objects to patronize. When a ban is placed on our motion pictures on the grounds that they educate the young in ways unmoral we must remember that the English have a sense of humor, and that this is only their clever way of saying that they should like to protect their own films. As a matter of fact, such papers as the London "Times" treat authors from the United States with genuine fairness. It is curious to note that they are less patronizing to our best seller type of book than are our own critics. They criticize them as popular stories and do not demand more from them. Criticisms of such authors as Willa Cather, Joseph Hergesheimer, Sinclair Lewis and many others are often more enthusiastic, possibly because less prejudiced by small and near concerns, than those meted out by wise American reviewers and critics.

There seems, therefore, no real reason for continuing to bewail the lack of appreciation shown to us by our English friends. They are more likely to be ill-informed about us than unappreciative; but more good American books are being published in England than ever before and they are receiving more notice.

WORTHLESS LITERARY AGENTS

IN these days of the complicated merchandising of a writer's product, the literary agent is a prime necessity. He protects author, editor, and publisher from maladjustment, both of actual contract and of ever present temperament. Yet the dishonest agent, the badly informed agent, the author's advisor who is not capable of advising are a menace to a host of unsuspecting and ambitious folk. Not only that, but they make more difficult the work of the magazine offices.

Few editors now regard the ever increasing flood of unsolicited manuscripts as a rich gold mine which may at any time yield a fine quality of ore. True, some of our best writers were in the past discovered by perspicacious manuscript readers; but this was before the days of the multiplicity of literary agents, short story courses, magazines dealing solely with literary markets and productions, and a host of other organizations, reputable or not, whose business it is to bridge the gap between the struggling writer and the magazine editor.

Magazine editors should urge authors to seek reputable literary agents and to avoid quacks. In this way the useless reading of thousands of manuscripts

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could be avoided; for tradition dictates that these manuscripts must be read. If these hundreds of agencies which claim to help the new writer find himself were actually competent to do so, the volume would decrease greatly and the reader would have to consider only manuscripts that had sufficient merit to be read. As it is, an unbelievably large number of these manuscripts are actually illiterate. Some are written by people who will never be able to write even ordinary good English, and many are obviously not the type of thing that the magazine they are submitted for prints. Yet these hundreds of writers' aids go on encouraging, for a fee, of course, hosts of aspirants who haven't a ghost of a chance to appear in a reputable magazine. A few of them are run by men and women who have at one time or another been in the magazine game and know what they are doing. But even these sometimes sacrifice their better judgment to the handy dollar. Some of these organizations are no better than money getting agencies managed by the same sort of quacks who continually prey upon the public in a dozen commercial fields. It is this sort of practice, also, that hurts the really excellent work of an intelligent literary agent. Fortunately there are a number of conscientious, discriminating persons in this business who know markets, literary values, prices, copyrights, movie opportunities, etc., and upon whose judgment an editor relies.

If we must have a middleman in the writing game — and the varied needs of magazines today make him essential — then he should be made to serve both writer and editor intelligently. It is no mean task to learn the needs of a dozen magazines, nor is it easy to fit the work of his clients to those needs. Because the job of reputable literary agenting is a difficult one, while that of gulling ignorant aspirants is comparatively easy, both magazines and writers suffer. The Authors' League has taken a strong stand against those agencies that are provedly crooked, but many of them cannot be prosecuted because, to all intents and purposes, they do give advice to writers. To prove that this advice is in most cases worthless is a greater task than even the Authors' League could undertake.

PROTEST

By Joseph Auslander

I WILL not make a sonnet from
Each little private martyrdom;
Nor out of love left dead with time
Construe a stanza or a rime.

We do not suffer to afford
The searched for and the subtle word:
There is too much that may not be
At the caprice of prosody.

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PATTERNS FOR THE FREE

By Irwin Edman

"A poet", says Thomas Love Peacock, "is a semi-civilized barbarian in a civilized age. The march of his intellect is like that of a crab, backwards." But even men of letters, so often the facile *ignoranti* of their generation, cannot remain long or altogether insensitive to the transformations in thought and in daily life which are making the contours of a new age. Poets breathe the common air; they cannot escape the poison of new ideas, though they may never have heard the name of the most deadly current bacillus. It was to be expected that the work of Darwin and Lyell should eventually find related imaginative utterance in a Hardy or an Anatole France. The laboratory finds its public voices among writers who have never seen a test tube. The new psychology affects novelists who could not identify an intelligence quotient or measure a reaction time.

In the same way it is inevitable that the rumble of industry should have reached even the Ivory Tower. The tumult of cities and the nervous anarchy of a jazz age must necessarily find appropriate voices and adequate patterns. Poets may yearn to move among eternities but the stream of their consciousness is colored with all the deposits of that life which most of them daily live in a mechanized, standardized and urbanized civilization.

The revolts against tradition in literature have too often been explained away as the mere exhibitionism of literary eccentrics or of writers perversely weary of beautiful classic moulds. The desire for change is far more plausibly explained by the rise of mechanical science, the spread of industry and the sophistication of psychology than by any merely personal foible of an abstract litterateur.

The revolt against traditional patterns in literature has been parallel with the revolt against traditional patterns in thought and life. In comparison with the revolution of our ideas concerning God and sex (the most cosmic and the most personal of human experiences), a modification of merely literary conventions may seem altogether trivial. What is a change in a cadence compared with a change in a creed? Mechanical inventions have changed the range and the intimate detail of the lives of most denizens of the planet. A verbal device of a novelist may hope at most to touch the imaginations of thousands; a chemist deals with poison gases that may kill or synthetic foods that may nourish millions. Why, one may well ask, should changes in the patterns of literature merit the attention of those interested in the larger and more serious patterns of our lives. Why should rhetoric become more important than existence?

If changes in literary forms were simply verbal and rhetorical, they would indeed be unimportant. But the revolts in the last fifty years have been expressions of those deeper and more pervasive changes which literature is gradually learning to express. There has been, in the first place, a reaction

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against the genteel tradition in literature. Writers have wearied of the routine prettiness of a "literary" poetry. They have sickened of the stereotype beauties of a tepid, abstract and elegant world. Time and again in the history of literature the same phenomena have occurred. Writers who have wished to be something more than flutists in words have wanted to give expression to all the possible areas of human thought and emotion. It is precisely this concern with those larger tracts of experience that makes Shakespeare seem to most readers so immeasurably more massive than Racine's tutored rhetoric of his so beautiful, so restricted and so rhetorical a world. Now the moderns, too, wish the scope of literature to be enlarged to permit the expression of that variety of thought and that anarchy of emotion which is coming to seem so peculiarly characteristic of our age. Poets have occasionally sought new forms and devices for their own sakes, and have found in a freshness of rhythm or a strange new trick of dialogue the sheer delight of an original technical beauty. In an imperfect universe any good is a cause for gratitude; and the searchers after novel loveliness ought to be thanked rather than forgiven. But, for the most part, the novelists and poets of the last twenty-five years have been feeling for and working toward new forms for more responsible reasons. They have found the old forms inadequate to express those miscellanies of life hitherto inadmissible to the literature of the genteel tradition.

The pursuit of new forms is thus engendered as part of the interest in a newer subject matter, and a larger one. Contemporary fiction, among its more serious practitioners, is no longer content with that prescribed and gardened terrain, cultivated so exquisitely and tactfully by an Edith Wharton and with such gravity by a Henry James. Their choice and smooth human landscapes now have come to seem meaningless elegant house parties on large enclosed estates shut in by tall trim hedges from the vulgar general life. The novelists, led by Bennett in England, by Lewis in America, have been reaching out among the rich areas of dulness and poverty, of humdrum tragedy and the dull edged comedy of the common man. They have passed from lawns in Surrey or terraces in Newport to the mean streets and mean souls of middle class life.

In the place of a poetry "warbling", as Norman Douglas somewhere says "about buttercups", we have a Masters in America, or a Masefield or a Wilfrid Gibson in England to try to make a music out of the glare and heat and routine of our own omnipresent industrial civilization. The polite blue surfaces of social romance have been ruffled by the uprush of dark passions not hitherto recognized as decent or tolerable materials for fiction. The actual unspoken torments of sex no longer lie veiled in the urbanities of a Howells or a Henry James. The net spiritual result of the recent serious movements in fiction may be suggested by saying that fiction has been bringing into its province whole areas of human concern that the older generation would have regarded as inelegant or unliterary. Writers as different as James Joyce and Sherwood Anderson have been attempting to bring literature, as Socrates brought philosophy, from the clouds to the haunts of men.

Underlying the appearance of new forms lies thus an interest in wider materials. Literature is no longer to be regarded as the expression of a choice and pretty, but of an authentic

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and comprehensive cosmos. Dreiser brings the actualities of sex; Lewis brings the actualities of business; Anderson, D. H. Lawrence, James Joyce and Virginia Woolf bring the misty and turbid recesses of the spirit into the field of literary subject matter. A wider area of the social scene is uncovered, and the novelist cuts deeper into the psychological soil. The outer aspect and the inner ferment have both been more completely and more minutely studied. It has come to seem a little tepid to be interested in writing merely as a subtle working in curious and irrelevant jewels. The adult artist is beginning to recognize that to write, if one is not merely to hum, is to write about something, and that writing is ultimately rendered great by the weight and poignancy of what it says and represents. Sinclair Lewis is impressive perhaps chiefly because he renders so bitterly and unmistakably the portrait of a futile civilization; Sherwood Anderson, because he follows so sincerely the inner stream of lost and reaching souls.

The interest in the enlargement of subject matter, if it has led to the search for new forms, has been partially eclipsed in interest by these forms. There are many reasons why an artist may come to be fascinated by new forms for their own sake. One of them arises from his awareness of a wider content than the older forms have embodied. The artist may feel that the formal rhythms and the stereotyped vocabulary of the older poetry, the objective and materialistic photography of fiction are inadequate to represent those wide tracts of experience and those fine *nuances* of feeling which are the business of a responsible modern intelligence. Or the interest in new forms may be the characteristic delight of the virtuoso in experiment, the abstracted pleasure of the technician in an unprecedented handling of words.

The arguments for experiments in verse forms are by this time familiar, and the experiments by this time dull. We have ceased to hear of late of the slavery of rhyme and the strait jacket of the formal metres. We have tired a little of puny imitators of Whitman's roaring freedom. But the tinkling and the controversy have left a net deposit that is all to the health of English verse. The disciples of free verse wished to remove poetry from the character of a formal ballet at a court function. They wished it to be the spontaneous song of a democratic and miscellaneous world. They have been more spontaneous than singing, and they have often widened the area of poetic materials without making that material into music. But their intention was generous and their effect salutary. Now that the heat of rebellion has died down, we know that the revolt against standard forms has been a little silly. Milton uses a thousand forms of blank verse in a thousand lines, and in the hands of a master, even the jeered heroic couplet may become a singing of endless variety; rhyme may become a subtle and pliable instrument of iteration and psychological echo.

The net effect of the revolt in poetry has been to release poets from the conventions of the poetasters and render them free voices of whatever of passion and intelligence they are provoked to in their life in the contemporary world. It may be a generation yet before the atmosphere of the modern mind becomes sufficiently pervasive to touch even poets. It was several hundred years after naturalism started in Greece that Lucretius appeared in Rome to translate the science of a free spirit into music. But intelligence is becoming domestic in modern verse. Miss Mil-

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lay treats love and E. A. Robinson treats failure and success with an unremitting ironic intelligence that is the very tincture of its time, and they sing in forms too beautiful to date. Other poets are learning from them that the free mind is not doomed to flee even beauty. All forms, the sonnet included, are free, so only that they are subdued to the articulate intention of an authentic emotion and an honest mind. An artist will find forms to fit his moods, and his moods may eventually be magnificent enough to match the wide canvas of possible human settings, and the subtilized organ of possible human passions. Only those enslaved to rebellion will say that free verse is the sole adequate instrument for a free poet. It is striking that Edwin Arlington Robinson, in many ways the most emancipated in temper and the most magnificent in reach of contemporary poets, has found in the ancient and austere pattern of the sonnet a suitable instrument for the singing of imaginative depths and freedom.

In the case of fiction there have been reasons far more serious than those of the virtuoso why new forms have been sought and found. James Joyce, more intelligibly and availably, Virginia Woolf, and, to some degree, May Sinclair have contrived to throw into suspicion the objective realism of Galsworthy, Bennett and Wells. Their method in fiction is indirectly — in the case of May Sinclair, fairly directly — the fruit of the new psychology and of the more recent philosophies.

From the new psychology these writers and many others have learnt the cardinal fact, known though not formulated by the common man, that people's behavior is as much determined by the things they do not think about as by the things about which they consciously do think. From philosophies new and old they have learnt that what is "really real" is what happens in, or to, a man's consciousness; that the objective world dissolves in fact and in analysis to what it is as experienced in the living stream that is a person's thought or emotion. D. H. Lawrence has tried and succeeded, despite all his turbid falterings, in making clear or at least phosphorescent what happens in the dark forest of the troubled subconscious self. James Joyce and Virginia Woolf have tried to reveal what the world is through and in the minds of those to whom it appears in broken flashes and intermingling echoes. The older method that revealed character in action and action in terms of doors and windows, tables and chairs, the meat, potatoes and furniture of our daily lives has come to seem unconvincing. It has, moreover, come to seem irrelevant to those novelists and those readers interested in the most primary of all realities, a man's soul. The new psychological method in fiction (a method, by the way, as old as Chekhov and Dostoievsky) is not a mere playful variation in form. It amounts to little short of a revolution in the fictionist's approach to life and his conception of the content of narrative literature.

The way in which, as the psychologists say, we apperceive our world is largely a matter of habit. And we are certainly habituated to the older method in fiction. Even the receptive find James Joyce as difficult as he is impressive. Our minds, as Bergson long ago suggested, are geometrized. We see life in fixities, in the routine categories of mechanism and of logic.

The sane man, it has been said, holds a lunatic in leash. And that poignant madness that lies simmering in the interior of many lives, outwardly sensible and polite, is only now being uttered in

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its native idiom by writers like May Sinclair, Virginia Woolf and James Joyce. That idiom of the basic hum and simmer of our lives, those glimpses of terrifying and real abysses, of haunting and ugly echoes, of thunderclaps of beauty arising suddenly in the midst of obscene reveries: these are surprising and terrible things. They fit into no usual codes and into no hitherto outspoken grammars of emotion. We are inclined to find them unintelligible or horrible or absurd. It will require many years of training to understand these new fluent languages by which novelists are trying to introduce us to the sobbing and staccato current of ourselves.

Dr. Johnson long ago pounded his walking stick testily on the pavement and thought that thus he had refuted Berkeley's conviction that the world was merely our ideas and perceptions. Many critics of these newer novelists bang, too, on the pavement or on their own heads and insist that these hard things alone are realities, and that only the stiff objective language and method of the older fiction is intelligible. The newer novelists are trying to find patterns that will free us to look keenly at ourselves. These patterns in fiction are not yet found. But these writers are pointing the way toward an art that will be as lucid and succinct and intelligible as the old, and will speak more eloquently and fully to man of his own unpetrified soul.

SONGS FOR A GENEROUS MAN

By Marion Strobel

I

YOU gave me green balloons — O foolish things! —
A sun-flower as giddy as the sun.
My hands that were so full of offerings
Were not too full to hold another one.

The foolish gifts to make me laugh or cry!
The sprig of lilacs and the parasol!
I knew how light your love was, how could I
So used to holding things, have let it fall?

II

Even the streets where we have been
Will not make me sigh or tarry,
Even a corner will only mean
An apothecary.

I shall call a moon a moon,
All your beauty I'll forget,
You'll be nothing to me soon —
But not yet . . . But not yet . . .

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PORGY

By DuBose Heyward

With Sketches by Theodore Nadejen

(The second of three selections from a novel of Negro life in old Charleston.)

"Death, ain't yuh gots no shame?"

IN the cool of the early morning, the procession took its departure for the cemetery that lay beyond the city limits to the north. First went the dilapidated hearse, with its rigid wooden plumes, and faded black velvet draperies that nodded and swayed inside the plate glass panels. Then followed the solitary carriage, in which could be seen massed black accentuated by several pairs of white cotton gloves held to lowered eyes. Behind the carriage came the mourners in a motley procession of wagons and buggies that had been borrowed for the occasion.

Porgy drove with Peter, and four women, seated on straight chairs in the wagon behind them, completed their company. From time to time a long drawn wail would rise from one of the conveyances, to be taken up and passed back from wagon to wagon like a dismal echo.

Moving from the Negro district into the wide thoroughfare of Meeting House Road, with its high buildings and its white faces that massed and scattered on the pavements, the cortège appeared almost grotesque, with the odd fusion of comedy and tragedy so inextricably a part of Negro life in its deep moments.

The fat German who kept the shop on the corner of King Charles Street and Summer Road called his clerk from the depths of the building, and their stomachs shook with laughter. But the little, dark Russian Jew in the next shop, who dealt in abominably smelling clothing, gave them a reproving look, and disappeared indoors.

The cemetery lay several miles beyond the city limits. The lot was bare of trees, but among the graves many bright flowering weeds masked the ugliness of the troubled earth. To the eastward a wide marsh stretched away to a far, bright line of sea. Westward, plowed fields swept out to a distant forest of yellow pine. From the sea to the far tree tops, the sky swung a dizzy arch of thin blue, high in the centre of which several buzzards hung motionless, watching.

In the vast emptiness of the morning the little procession crawled out to the edge of the broken wooden fence that marked the enclosure, and stopped.

By the time the last wagon had arrived, the cheap pine casket was resting upon battens over the grave, and the preacher, robed in white, was preparing to commence the service.

The mourners gathered close about the grave.

"Death, ain't yuh gots no shame?" called a clear, high, soprano voice; and immediately the mortal embodiment of infinite sorrow broke and swayed about the grave in the funeral chant. Three times the line swung its curve of song, shrill, keen, agonizing; then it fell away

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to a heart wrenching minor on the burden:

Take dis man an' gone—gone.
Death, ain't yuh gots no shame?

When the singing ceased, the burial service commenced, the preacher extemporizing fluently. Taking his rhythm from the hymn, he poured his words along its interminable reiteration until the cumulative effect rocked the entire company.

The final moment of the ritual arrived. The lid was removed from the casket, and the mourners were formed into line to pass and look upon the face of the dead. A very old, bent Negress went first. She stooped, then suddenly, with a shriek of anguish, cast herself beside the coffin.

"Tell Peter tuh hold de do' open fuh me. I's comin' soon!" she cried.

"Yes, Gawd, goin' soon", responded a voice in the crowd. Others pressed about the grave, and the air was stabbed by scream on scream. Grief spent itself freely, terrifyingly.

Slowly the clashing sounds merged into the regular measure of a spiritual. Beautiful and poignant it rose, swelling out above the sounds of falling earth as the grave was filled:

What yuh goin' ter do when yuh
come out de wilderness,
Come out de wilderness,
Come out de wilderness;
What yuh goin' ter do when yuh
come out de wilderness
Leanin' on my Lord.

Leanin' on my Lord,
Leanin' on my Lord,
Leanin' on my Lord
Who died on Calvary.

The music faded away in vague, uncertain minors. The mood of the crowd changed almost tangibly. There was an air of restless apprehension. Nervous glances were directed toward the entrance. Peter, always sagacious, unless taken unawares, had conferred in advance with Porgy about this moment. When he had helped him from the wagon, he had stationed him just inside the fence, where he could be lifted quickly into the road.

"De las' man in de grabeyahd goin' tuh be de nex' one tuh git buried", he had reminded his friend.

Now, as the final shovelful of earth was thrown upon the grave, he came running to Porgy, and lifted him quickly into the road. Behind them broke a sudden earth shaking burst of sound, as of the stampeding of many cattle, and past them the mourners swept, stumbling, fighting for room; some assisting weaker friends, others fighting savagely to be free of the enclosure. In the centre of the crowd, plunging forward with robes flying, was the preacher. In an incredibly short time the lot was cleared. Then, from a screening bush near the grave, arose the old Negress who had been the first to wail out her grief. She had lain there forgotten, overcome by the storm of her emotion. She tottered feebly into the road.

"Nebber you min', Sister", the preacher assured her comfortingly. "Gawd always lub de righteous."

Dazed, and much pleased at the attention that she was receiving, while still happily unmindful of its cause, the old woman smiled a vague smile, and was hoisted into the wagon.

During the funeral the sun had disappeared behind clouds that had blown in swiftly from the sea, and now a scurry of large drops swept over the vehicles, and trailed away across the desolate graves.

"Dat's all right now fer Robbins", commented Porgy. "Gawd done sen' he rain already fuh wash he feetsteps offen dis eart'."

"Oh, yes, Brudder!" contributed a woman's voice; and, "Amen, my Jedus!" added another.

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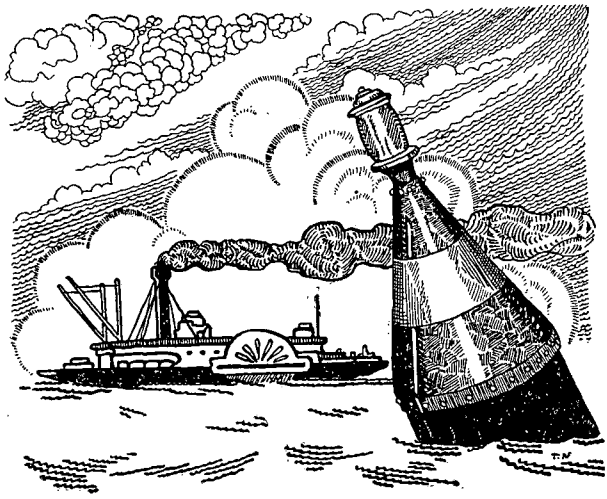

Exit Peter

IN the early afternoon of the day of the funeral, Porgy sat in his doorway communing with Peter. The old man was silent for awhile, his grizzled head bowed, and an expression of brooding tenderness upon his lined face.

"Robbins war a good man", he reflected at length, "an' dat nigger, Crown, war a killer, an' fuhebber gettin' intuh trouble. Yet, dere lie Robbins, wid he wife an' fadderless chillen; an' Crown done gone he ways tuh do de same t'ing ober again somewheres else."

"Gone fuh true. I reckon he done lose now on Kittiwar Islan', in dem palmettuh t'icket; an' de rope ain't nebber make fuh ketch um an' hang um." Porgy stopped suddenly, and motioned with his head toward someone who had just entered the court. The new arrival was a white man of stocky build, wearing a wide brimmed hat, and a goatee. He was swinging a heavy cane, and he crossed the court directly and paused before the two. For a moment he stood looking down at them with brows drawn fiercely together. Then he drew back his coat, exhibiting a police badge, and a heavy revolver in a breast holster.

"You killed Robbins", he shot out suddenly at Peter. "And I'm going to hang you for it. Come along now!" and he reached out and laid a firm hand upon the old man's shoulder.

Peter shook violently, and his eyes rolled in his head. He made an ineffectual effort to speak, tried again, and finally said, "'Fore Gawd, Boss, I ain't nebber done it."

Like a flash, the pistol was out of its holster, and pointing between his eyes. "Who did it, then?" snapped the man.

"Crown, Boss. I done see him do um", Peter cried in utter panic.

The man laughed shortly. "I thought so", he said. Then he turned to Porgy.

"You saw it too, eh?"

There was panic in Porgy's face, and in his lap his hands had clinched upon each other. But his eyes were fixed upon the paving. He drew a deep breath, and waited.

A flare of anger swept the face above

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him. "Come. Out with it. I don't want to have to put the law on you."

Porgy's only answer was a slight tremor that shook the hands in his lap. The detective's face darkened, and sweat showed under his hat brim. Suddenly his temper bolted.

"Look at me, you damned nigger!" he shouted.

Slowly the sitting figure before him relaxed, almost it seemed, muscle by muscle. At last the hands fell apart, and lay flexed and idle. Finally Porgy raised eyes that had become hard and impenetrable as onyx. They met the angry glare that beat down upon them without flinching. After a long moment, he spoke slowly, and with great quietness.

"I ain't know nuttin' 'bout um. I been inside, asleep on my bed, wid de do' closed."

"You're a damn liar", the man snapped.

He shrilled a whistle, and two policemen entered.

"He saw the killing", the detective said, indicating Peter. "Take him along, and lock him up as a material witness."

"How about the cripple?" asked one of the officers.

"He could not have helped seeing it", the man said sourly. "That's his room right there. But I can't make him come through. But it don't matter. One's enough to hang Crown, if we ever get him. Come, get the old man in the wagon."

The policeman lifted the shaking old Negro to his feet. "Come along, Uncle. It ain't going to be as bad for you as Crown, anyway", encouraged one of them. Then the little party passed out of the entrance, leaving Porgy alone.

From the street sounded the shrill gong of the patrol wagon, followed by the beat of swiftly receding hoofs upon the cobbles.

Enter the Goat

THE languor of a southern May was in the air. It was a season dear to the heart of a Negro. Work on the wharves was slowing down, and the men were putting in only two or three days a week. There were always some of them lying about the court, basking in the sun, laughing, and telling stories while they waited for their women to come from the "white folks'" kitchens, with their full dinner pails.

Near the entrance, the stevedores usually lounged, their great size differentiating them from most of the other men. They had bright bandanas about their thick necks, and under their blue cotton shirts moved broad, flat backs that could heft a five hundred pound cotton bale. Earning more money than the others, and possessing vast physical strength in a world of brute force, they lorded it swaggeringly about the court; taking the women that they wanted, and dressing them gorgeously in the clashing crimsons and purples that they loved.

Grief over the loss of Robbins had stormed itself out at the funeral. Peter's ill fortune still occasioned general comment, but slight concern to the individual. There was an air of gaiety about. The scarlet of the geraniums was commencing to flicker in a run of windy flame on each window sill; and from the bay came the smell of salt air blown across young marshgrass.

At the wharf, across the narrow street, the fishermen were discharging strings of gleaming whiting and porgy. Vegetable sloops, blowing up from the Sea Islands, with patched and tawny

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sails, broke the flat cobalt of the inner harbor with the crosswash of their creamy wakes.

Through the back door of the cookshop Maria, the huge proprietress, could be seen cutting shark steaks from a four foot hammerhead that one of the fishermen had given her. All in all, it was a season for the good things of life, to be had now for scarcely more than the asking.

Only Porgy sat lonely and disconsolate in his doorway and watched the sunlight creep up the eastern wall until it faded to a faint red at the top, then the blue dusk grew under the wharf, and swirled through the street and court. He had not been able to get to his stand since Peter's departure; and the small store of coins, which he kept under a loose brick in his hearth, was nearing exhaustion. Also, he missed his old friend keenly and could not enter into the lighthearted life about him.

Presently two women entered. Porgy saw that they were Robbins's widow, and her sister, who now shared her room. He had been awaiting their coming eagerly, as they had left in the early afternoon to carry bed clothing and food to the jail for Peter.

"How yuh fin' um, Sister?" he hailed.

The younger woman paused, standing in the shadow, and the widow lowered herself to a seat beside Porgy.

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She had put her grief aside, and gone resolutely about her task of earning a living for the three children.

"I can't puzzle dis t'ing out", she said after a while. "De old man ain't done nuttin', an' dey done gots um lock up like a chicken t'ief. Dey say dey gots tuh keep um till dat nigger Crown get ketch; an' Gawd knows when dat debble ob a t'ing goin' tuh happen."

"It sho pay nigger tuh go blin' in dis world", contributed the young woman. "Porgy ain't gots much leg, but he sho got sense."

After a moment of reflection, Porgy replied: "Sense do berry well; but he can't lift no weight."

A big stevedore was crossing the court, his body moving easily with the panther-like flow of enormous muscular power under absolute control.

The beggar's eyes became wistful.

"Sense gots power tuh take a t'ing atter yuh gits dere", he said. "But he nebber puts bittle in a belly what can't leabe he restin' place. What I goin' do now sence Peter gone, an' I can't git on de street?"

"Pray, Brudder, pray", said the widow devoutly. "Ain't yuh see Gawd done soffen de haht of dat yalluh buryin' ondehtakuh attuh I done pray tuh him fuh a whole day an' night. Gawd gots leg fuh de cripple."

"Bless de Lord!" ejaculated the young woman.

"An' he gots comfort fuh de widder."

"Oh, my Jedus!" crooned Porgy, beginning to sway.

"An' food fuh de fadderless."

"Yes, Lord!"

"An' he goin' raise dis poor nigger out de dus'."

"Allelujah!"

"An' set um in de seat ob de righteous."

"Amen, my Sister!"

For a little while the three figures, showing now only as denser shadows in a world of shade, swayed slowly from side to side. Then, without saying a word, Porgy drew himself across his threshold, and closed the door very softly.

It was not yet day when Porgy awakened suddenly. His eyes were wide, and his face was working with unwonted emotion. In the faint light that penetrated his bleared window from a street lamp, he made his way to the hearth, and removed the brick from his secret depository. With feverish haste he counted his little store, placing the coins in a row before him. Then with the utmost care he recounted them, placing them in little piles, one for the coppers, one for the nickels, and one for the dimes. When he had fully satisfied himself as to the extent of his wealth, his tension relaxed, and, tying the money in a rag which he tore from his bedclothing, he closed his hand firmly upon it, crawled back into bed, and immediately fell asleep.

Two days later, Porgy drove his chariot out through the wide entrance into a land of romance and adventure. He was seated with the utmost gravity in an inverted packing case, that proclaimed with unconscious irony the virtues of a well known toilet soap. Beneath the box two solid lopsided wheels turned heavily. Before him, between a pair of improvised shafts, a patriarchal goat tugged with the dogged persistence of age which has been placed upon its mettle, and flaunted an intolerable stench in the face of the complaisant and virtuous soap box.

As oblivious of the mirth provoking quality of his appearance as he was of a smell to which custom had inured him, Porgy turned his equipage daringly into

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a new thoroughfare, and drove through a street where high, bright buildings stood between wide gardens, and where many ladies passed and repassed on the sidewalks, or in glittering carriages.

But the magic that had come to pass, even in the triumph of that first morning, stirred vague doubts and misgivings within him. He noticed that while he occasioned slight comment in the Negro quarter, no sooner had he entered the white zone, than people commenced to pass him with averted faces, and expressions that struggled between pity and laughter. When he finally reached his old stand before the apothecary shop, these misgivings crystallized into a definite fear.

Several of his clients happened to be passing the shop together. One of them was clerk to an apothecary farther down the street. He seized his nose with one hand, while he pointed at Porgy with the other. Then all seized their noses, shaking with laughter, and waited to see what would happen.

Porgy looked his outfit over carefully. Certainly it was working with the utmost satisfaction. Somewhat mystified, he tied the ancient animal to a post, and, with great gravity, swung himself out of his wagon, across the pavement, and to his old stand.

The boys who had laughed stood nearby, and were joined by others, until soon there was quite a group.

Presently there issued from the shop the loud voice of the proprietor: "Oh, Mary, come quick, and bring the broom. Something has died again." Then followed the sound of boxes being overturned, while dust from a prodigious sweeping bellied in clouds from the door. Then the apothecary, very red in the face, came out for air, and found the goat. The burst of laughter that greeted him increased his irritation. Brandishing the broom, and in no uncertain language, he drove Porgy from his door.

But the bystanders had so enjoyed the joke at the apothecary's expense, and were feeling in such high good humor, that when Porgy had an opportunity to appraise his collections, he found that they amounted to more than he frequently got from a whole day of patient waiting.

It is impossible to conceive of a more radical change than that brought about in Porgy's life by his new emancipation. From his old circumstances which had conspired to anchor him always to one spot, he was now in the grip of new forces that as inevitably resulted in constant change of scene. Soon he became quite a metropolitan, and might have been seen in any part of the city, either sitting in his wagon at the curb, or, if the residents of the locality seemed lenient in their attitude toward goats, disembarking, and trying his luck in the strip of shade along the wall.

In those days, everyone tolerated Porgy — for a while. He had become "a character". The other beggars gnashed their teeth, but were powerless.

On certain days he would turn to the south when he left the court, and soon would emerge into a land of such beauty that he never lost the illusion that it was unreal. No one seemed to work in that country, except the happy, well clothed Negroes who frequently came to back gates when he passed, and gave him tender morsels from the white folks' kitchens. The great, gleaming houses looked out at him with kindly eyes that peered between solid walls of climbing roses. Ladies on the deep piazzas would frequently send a servant running out to give him a coin and speed him on his way.

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Before the houses and the rose trellises stretched a broad drive, and beyond its dazzling belt of crushed shell the harbor lay between its tawny islands, like a sapphire upon a sailor's weathered hand. Sometimes Porgy would steal an hour from the daily rounds, pause there, and watch a great, blunt nosed steamer heave slowly out of the unknown, to come to rest with a sigh of spent steam, and a dusty thundering of released anchor chains.

"Gawd sho gots a long arm", he would murmur; or, "Porgy, yo' sho is a little somethin' aftuh all."

Then there would be other days when he would repair to the narrow retail street, with its unbelievable windows, and drawing near to the curb, between the tall carriages of the shoppers would fall heir to the pennies which they got with their change, and which were of no value to such as they.

Always kind hands dropped coins in his cup, and sped him on. They were great days for Porgy. And great were the nights when he would tell of his adventures to the envious circle that gathered in the dusk of the court.

But Porgy was by nature a dreamer, and there were times even in those days, when his mind returned with wistful longing to the old uninterrupted hours when he used to sit, lost in meditation, under the unmarked drift of time. Some day, he would tell himself, there would come one with a compassion so great that he would give both Porgy and the goat place by his doorstep. Then life would be perfect indeed.

ONE WEARY OF TOO MUCH PASSION MAKES LAMENT

By Dorothy Dow

THIS bitter red
Of bud and spray
And burning berry
Dies away

Beneath a cover
Whiter than
The sudden flesh
Of any man!

I would to find
Among the throng
Some breast like Winter's,
Chill and strong,

To press to peace
This sullen cry:
"Love is a thirst
"Of which I die" . . .

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PARENTS IN MODERN FICTION

By Eva v. B. Hansl

BIOLOGICALLY speaking, it has always been considered necessary to have parents in order to procure children. But in fiction this necessity has not been openly acknowledged. Here the triumph of the egg would seem to be complete, for evidently the literary concept of that great philosophic problem has been that the egg came first. The hen, as hen, is what has interested our writers; or the development of the egg into hen or cock. Very little, in contrast, have they seemed concerned with the relation of hen to egg . . . a most intriguing source of speculation, however!

In other words, we have had, in our fiction, stories of boys and girls growing up through youth and maturity to old age; but in the course of those stories rarely have we had the careful analysis of the relation of those boys and girls to their parents or to their own children which this relationship might warrant. We have had studies of adolescence, of love of all sorts, of friendships, success and failure, intrigue and villainy of every description; but seldom do we find, as a theme for a novel, the relationship between parents and children — a relationship which antedates all others in life, a relationship which colors the whole social fabric of the child and leaves its indelible impress upon character and life attitudes.

"Parents!" exclaimed the librarian when I asked for books containing specimens of that *genus homo*, "parents? But aren't there parents in every book?"

To be sure,— somewhere in the book, in the background or on the sidelines perhaps, but seldom in the centre of the scene. They are not people, these shadowy figures, rather are they convenient hooks on which to hang the blame for this or that characteristic or quality in the hero's makeup, or "supes" to fill in a scene or add to the rumble of the multitude without. Rarely, very rarely, are they real flesh and blood personages who are as important to the plot or the character study as the hero or heroine and their contemporaries. Much might be said, incidentally, of Grandfather Jones's beetling brows which became the facemark of all the Joneses thereafter, of Uncle Jeb's violent temper which had, by some sidestroke of nature, got itself mixed up in the ingredients of Sam Jones's, our hero's, character; or of Grandmother Meggs's iron will which had kept everyone in the family from doing what he pleased. But with the problems of mother love, of parental responsibility, of filial affection, few of the novels of our day have dealt. Few and far between they came, strangely enough, until this last spring flood of fiction. And now, though I find but four or five books on the library shelves which fit into my category, I discover a goodly dozen in the most recent publishers' catalogues — and among the best sellers, at that.

What can be the reason for this? As in the literature about children, the impetus has come, I believe, from the newer psychology. If psychology is

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the study of the soul and if novelists are concerned with the same subject from an artistic rather than a scientific point of view, is it not inevitable that the findings of the one will influence the writings of the other? It is obvious that the same intellectual forces have influenced May Sinclair in writing "Mary Olivier", "Harriett Frean", and "Arnold Waterlow" as inspired Harvey O'Higgins when he wrote "Julie Cane" and Rebecca West when she wrote "The Judge". It is a safe conjecture that all three are so impressed with the validity of the Freudian theories of human behavior that they interpret life through the principles of psychoanalysis. They have done much to popularize these principles and to make them comprehensible to the lay mind.

But it is not so obvious, perhaps, why our leading women novelists — Edith Wharton and Anne Douglas Sedgwick — should, this time, both elect as their theme the effect upon the daughter of having a mother who chooses to disregard the moral code, nor why Philip Gibbs in "The Reckless Lady" should join them in speculating upon a similar situation. And yet — are not these novelists, also, influenced by the *Zeitgeist*, the spirit of the times, in choosing to discuss a social condition which is becoming more and more prevalent as women's independence grows and as traditions of family life change and are thrown, many of them, into the discard altogether? Mrs. Wharton may have been tempted, moreover, after dealing in "The Age of Innocence" and "Old New York" with people who lived in an era of immutable tradition, to try her hand at delineating a similar group living in a more tolerant age when the sacredness of those traditions is being questioned and moral laxities are winked at rather than frowned upon. Olive Higgins Prouty with "Stella Dallas" antedated both "The Mother's Recompense" and "The Little French Girl" in her study of the child caught in the divorce mill. It is a subject that must be studied and discussed; and it is fortunate, for our clearer understanding of these sociological problems confronting us, that some of our best novelists have taken up this theme.

Long before this season's best sellers were sped across the country in their multiple editions, there were novelists who wrote about parents and children for no other reason than that they happened to be preeminently interested in the matter. Dorothy Canfield is the poet of the Odes and Lyrics of Domesticity. She is at her best when she deals with children and homes and family feelings. Her creations who have nothing to do with house and hearth, usually the villains, are always creatures of straw and brick — not human beings. (As, for instance, the lover in "The Brimming Cup" — was there ever such an inanimate mouthpiece? And was he not the evil spirit who threatened all the Lares and Penates of Neale and Marise?) Great passions are not her forte, but rather the gentler domestic loves, those subtle emotions which make up family life and elude the pen of many of the most gifted writers. Of deep devotion she can write, of the abiding love that says little and means much, of the affection that is taken for granted in families, the little irritations and enmities that only make the reconciliations sweeter. These are her realm. And yet there are those among her readers to whom her special talent, because of its accompanying limitations, cannot make of her books anything but treatises on child training or tracts on moral living. But to anyone who happens to be interested in the family situation, her

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novels must be illuminating and inspiring.

I wish I might announce to the readers interested in the problems of parenthood that the writers of these various books are agreed as to what type of parent is best suited to train the next generation in the way it should go. But, so far as I can see, there is not a single consoling or helpful generality to be drawn from the whole collection. Although every kind of parent is represented — from the most selfish to the most self sacrificing; from the most indifferent to the most solicitous; from the stupidest to the wisest — strange to say, all the offspring of this parental variety turn out well: the sort that any parent might be proud of and that could be trusted to go through the rest of life without coming a cropper. The only one about whose future I am a bit worried is the headstrong Anne Clephane who insists upon marrying the man her mother does not want her to marry because she knows too much about him. Even "So Big", whose mother wore herself to a callous hardness only to make her son soft, will come out all right in the end, Miss Ferber has us assured as we close the book.

Now whether these children turn out well because of or in spite of the sort of parents they had to contend with, is a matter of conjecture. Is this cheerful optimism due to a popular demand for happy endings or to a staunch belief that good stuff will out, no matter what the environment? Or are some of the writers of the opinion that a stupid, foolish or neglectful parent is a good obstacle for a child to overcome in its fight through life?

At all events, the younger generation would seem to be sound and trustworthy. They see clearly and they act fearlessly. They are not muddled as were their parents, poor dears, cramped with inhibitions, warped in the tortuous pursuit of false social standards, branded by social injustice. Will these children, I wonder, when they themselves become mothers and fathers, be confronted with new difficulties arising out of the very fearlessness and freedom which they have gained? No doubt they will! But those will be new problems for new novelists to discuss.

Not all will be new, however. Most of the problems are as old as mother love itself. And the newest of them all is still that moot matter of careers for mothers — a problem for which countless women all over the world are seeking a solution in their own home laboratories. No one has discussed it more fairly than Helen Hull in "Labyrinth". Miss Hull seems to have said everything there is to say on both sides; yet she leaves her heroine going further and further into the maze. Is there a way out so long as the maternal instinct lasts? No book, in my acquaintance, save some of Dorothy Canfield's, has pictured so well the normal and wholesome mother as we find Catherine Hammond to be, nor the everyday-ness and the twenty-four-hours-a-day-ness of this job of being a mother. Miss Hull describes to perfection the tug of war between a heart that is brimful of love for husband and family and a mind that is buzzing with ideas seeking to be carried out; the endless conflict between being an individual or the main cog in the family machine. This is a book to be seriously considered when "This Freedom" might well be thrown into the Bosphorus!

Can a mother run away from her husband and child and hope to regain any maternal influence if she returns to that child when it is full grown? Mrs.

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Wharton seems to think not. That Kate Clephane and her daughter should have found each other most congenial and sympathetic after fifteen years' separation is comprehensible enough, but that Mrs. Clephane should wield any influence over her daughter would be most doubtful. Someone had assured her that she had won her daughter's heart, with the words, "She's taken a tremendous fancy to you." But was it possible that that absurd phrase had ever satisfied her? "Daughters", she said to herself, "don't take a fancy to their mothers! Mothers and daughters are part of each other's consciousness, in different degrees and in a different way, but still with the mutual sense of something that has always been there. A real mother is just a habit of thought with her children." She found that "to be the background, the atmosphere, of her daughter's life; to depend on Anne, to feel that Anne depended upon her; it was the one perfect companionship she had ever known, the only close tie unmarred by dissimulation and distrust". And yet, when she claimed the parental right of interfering in her daughter's marriage to a man whom she knew to be unsuited to her, her daughter turned upon her with the cruel outcry, "What right? You gave up all your rights over me when you left my father for another man!" This is not saying that a daughter whose mother had been deeply devoted to her all her life would not be likely to say that her mother had no right to interfere in her choice of a husband (I believe it is the usual retort adolescent); but the remark would not have cut so deep nor would the mother regard it as anything more than an outburst of frustrated youth.

There is another question Mrs. Wharton raises in "The Mother's Recompense". Is anything more important to parents than the high opinion of their children? Their acceptance of us at our own valuation, as the supreme beings in their earthly experience, is one of the most potent influences in keeping men and women living up to the best that is in them. It is a far more powerful incentive (or deterrent, if you will) than any law, any social standards, any moral codes. If one concedes this, one can understand Kate Clephane's cowardice, founded on her terrific fear of hearing her own child turn upon her with an accusing, "Not *you*, Mother?" should she tell Anne that her fiancé had once been her mother's lover. But one cannot help feeling that the braver, more deeply loving mother by far was that poor, miserable, cheap little wretch, Stella Dallas, who did a loathsome thing in order that a daughter who wished to remain loyal might despise her mother and go to live with her father to her social advantage. What greater sacrifice can a mother make than her child's esteem? What is giving up a lover in comparison? "How amazing to be so crazy about your own child", thought Stella Dallas, humming a tune deep in her throat as she packed to go back to her child who had been "on loan" to her ex-husband, "that being crazy about a man loses all interest and excitement in comparison."

Although these authors may not be unanimous in any of their opinions about parents, they are evidently all of a mind that children have an almost indestructible loyalty toward their parents. How much that is cruel and wrong and stupid must the children suffer from us, and how uncomplaining they are! How often they shame us with their intuitive, fullhearted realization of our true inner needs, when we,

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who have passed through childhood, should be the ones to remember and understand! When the Little French Girl pieces together the known fragments of her mother's life and finds that Mme. Vervier was one to prefer a succession of lovers to one continuous husband, does she revile her, accuse her of deception, denounce her for the shadow which she has cast upon her child's name? Not only is Alix's forgiveness and understanding immediate, but she feels the need, instinctively, to protect her mother "from the world's cruel scrutiny. She was promising her — oh, with what a passion of fidelity — that their love, the love of mother and child, was unharmed, set apart, firmly fixed and sacred forever." What does Arnold Waterlow do for the mother who never did anything for him but try to break his will? All but wreck his life trying to cover up the defalcations of his older brother, in order that she may be spared any disappointment in her firstborn. And when Stephen Fleming (in "The Reckless Lady") finds out that his mother had run away from his father with another man, does he run from her too, in the censorious way youth is supposed to have? Not a bit of it! "He belonged to his mother, good or bad. Her love for him overwhelmed everything else, and as long as she lived he would never be able to pay her back for that."

And yet, the psychologists say there is no such thing as filial instinct!

As I look over these books and review their stories, I am struck by the fact that there is in none of them a father and son relation — the delightful kind that you meet, not once a year during Boys' Week, but once in a while in a lifetime, especially in this country. Except in "The Little French Girl", "The Mother's Recompense", "Stella Dallas", and Rose L. Franken's "Pattern", the relationship between the generations is that of mother and son or father and daughter. Whereas the latter is invariably ideally conceived and beautifully depicted (mostly by men!), the former is often shown to be a dangerous romantic attachment (usually the author is a woman!), as in "Julie Cane" or in "The Judge". In "Julie Cane" Alan Birdsall's mother is the weaker of the two and becomes the victim of the boy's jealousy which she herself has aroused; in "The Judge", quite the most powerfully and beautifully written book of them all, the mother is the stronger personality; realizing to what a pass her hold on her son will bring him, she drowns herself in order to free him. That her sacrifice may be too late is the deepest tragedy of this all too tragic story.

In contradistinction to these parents who keep too strong a hold upon their children, are those whose offspring "just grow" without any parental guidance at all, and those who have learned that difficult technique of parental control which consists in letting the reins fall slack when jogging along, and pulling them taut when the filly needs to feel the strong hand of authority. The parents in "The Education of Peter" by John Wiley are, like those in most stories of American college life, negligible creatures whose only directions to their son for going through life are done up in a compact set of social standards and the admonition to do nothing that would disgrace the family. (I notice in "The Plastic Age" that most of the boys do remember, at a critical juncture, what "the Old Lady" expected of them!) The father in "My Daughter Helen" by Allan Monkhouse was an extremist in the matter of "hands off"; and so, I think, was the mother of "Harry" (in a character sketch of that name

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written by Neith Boyce). They were both devoted parents who felt, sincerely, that a *laissez faire* doctrine was the best one to adopt if you wanted your child to live its own life.

"If you give your child freedom," a famous educator once said, "you must teach him how to use it." The father who lived up to this precept was Jim Hawthorne in "Soundings". Left with a little girl to bring up, he made up his mind that he would teach her "not to be afraid of traditional beliefs or rules of conduct. I'll teach her to stand on her own two feet, to answer to herself alone. She shall be honest." He never pried, but he always knew, intuitively, what was going on in her heart and mind. And when he didn't know, he waited for her to tell him. He knew when it was time for her to fly the nest, and he pushed her out before she herself realized that she was restless because she wanted to try her wings. And when he found her mortally wounded in love, he did not bustle about, henlike, to apply poultices of social diversion, but stood by, ready to apply first aid in sympathy and understanding when they were wanted, trusting in the girl's own spiritual vitality to pull her through:

> It was her father who, metaphorically, dropped straw beneath the wheels so that she might pull herself out of the mud. . . . Jim had followed every footstep of her way of the cross, as he called it, had watched and waited for the moment when she would again be susceptible to outside suggestion. From his own experience he knew that the first shock leaves one numbed, unreachable, like a city in tumult, all of whose wires of communication have been cut. So he had devoted himself utterly to living on the outskirts; jubilant if for a bare minute a day he could get in touch, however faintly; rewarded, after months of constant trying, by seeing her make a first effort to come to him.

Long before I read these books I suspected that when it comes to parenthood, fathers get most of the fun out of it, in spite of the fact that they have to foot the bills. Now I am convinced of it. They have none of the pain of it, none of the duties of cook, bottle washer, and policeman; and they can get away from the dear darlings at a moment's notice and rest their nerves on the golf course or any other place *outside* the house! They can enjoy their children in those intervals between meals and conferences when they feel inclined to frolic, and they have a perspective on the child as a whole. Whereas the mother, poor thing — it isn't the world that is too much with her, but the children! Is it any wonder that she frequently gets her values and her temper upset, and becomes more particular about mud on the carpets than the muddy state of her relations with her own children? Isn't it easier for fathers to maintain the position of idols because there isn't the chance to know them so well?

Not all mothers are to the vocation born — they do their best, perhaps, but they haven't the gift. Of this type there are many in our current fiction — in "The Home-Maker", "Julie Cane", "Alice Adams", "Jeremy and Hamlet", and scores of others. Horrid mothers, they are, but good housekeepers and of good standing in their little community no doubt.

By contrast, there are the mothers whose social position is most insecure because they choose to disregard current standards of morality, who probably pay no attention to the housekeeping (as most of them have no house to keep!) but who are the most delightful and charming mothers imaginable. Can anyone find a more wholly gracious and lovely mother than Mme. Vervier in "The Little French Girl"? Is it any wonder her

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daughter concluded that whatever her mother did was right? All the naughty mammas — those who ran away from home — are wholly charming and quite successful with their children. Strangely enough, they all have most conventional daughters. What the moral implication is to those of us who stay at home to face the domestic guns, I dare not say!

What *is* a parent's recompense? Mrs. Wharton did not make it clear to me what she thought a mother's recompense might be, but I have found a hint of it in two other books — one from a man who lived away from his family for many years and one from a man who looked back upon the home of his childhood as embodying what he hoped his own to be.

Colonel Fleming came to town and, after dark, walked to Montpelier Square to look at a small house where his family were living, and he felt abominably like Enoch Arden. . . . What a mucker he had made of his life, or rather, what a bad deal he had had! He would have given the whole world to knock at that door and take his place there at the family table. He had visions of sitting at the head of the table, with a few old friends, proud of that boy and girl of his, listening to their plans for the future. . . . That is how it ought to have been!

That was how the Reckless Lady robbed him of his recompense.

Neale had been persuading Marise, in "Rough-Hewn", to give up a career and marry him.

"How do you know that everyone wants a home?" she had exclaimed in answer to one of his arguments.

And then he began to tell her of the home he remembered, which was his reason for believing that everyone wants a home.

He began anywhere, the first thing that came into his mind. What the house was like, and where the library was, and how he liked his own room, and the security of it; his free play with little boys on the street that was his world, and how he felt back of him, as a sure refuge from the uncertainties of that or any other great world, the certainties of what he found when he ran up the steps every afternoon, opened the door, his door, and stepped into his home where he was sure of being loved and cared for and yet not fettered and shut in. "Father and Mother always let me alone, let me grow."

He told of the meal-times and his boy's raging appetite, and his mother's delight in it. He told of the evenings when Mother and Father sat reading together; of the free-flowing tide of trust and affection between his parents, changing with their changes, never the same, never different; trust and affection of which he had never been really conscious but which had always been the background of his life.

That he should feel this about his home — was that not his parents' recompense for all that they had borne and slaved and suffered for him?

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THREE ROUSING CHEERS!!!

The Parody Adventures of Our Youthful Heroes

I: THE ROLLO BOYS LOST IN THE CURWOOD

OR, TRACKING THROUGH GOD'S COUNTRY FOR THE WOMAN

By Corey Ford

With Sketches by Gluyas Williams

"WHERE is Harry?" exclaimed a brown eyed, curly haired youth of nineteen, as he gazed in dismay at the impenetrable forest, extending further than the eye would reach.

"I don't know", replied Harry, a sturdy youth of eighteen summers. "Where is Dick?"

"I don't know," replied Dick, the eldest of the trio as well as their senior in years. "Where is Tom?"

"That's what I was trying to find out", replied the brown haired, curly eyed youth. "We are the three Rollo Boys", he explained, "and we are lost in the midst of this interminable wilderness."

"What shall we do?" queried Harry in distress.

"Let's go off on a lark", returned the fun loving Rollo merrily; and suiting the action to the word, he mounted the twittering bird and flew to the topmost branches of a high tree, from which point he gazed about him in all directions. "We are surrounded by a jungle of words", he read, "reaching beyond the rim of civilization itself, extending on and on in a vast descriptive paragraph, boundless, endless, meaningless . . . stretching on all sides . . . stretching . . . and yawning . . . "

"Hark!" harked Dick suddenly, as Tom took out his notebook and rapidly ran down a column of figures, where he rejoined his brothers. Now from the distance they made out a sharp, metallic tap! tap! tap! Yet again it rang through the forest—tap! tap! tap!

"Follow me!" cried Dick;
and shoulder- *words, words, words,*
ing his knapsack, *words, words,*
he led his brothers *words,*
single file through the
words, trackless waste of
words, words, words in the direction
words, words, words, of the sound,
till they sank exhausted on a period. What was their surprise to discover a large, middle aged gentleman, dressed in the uniform of a Royal Northwest Mounted Policeman, hammering busily on a portable typewriter propped up before him on a stump. As the huge muscles bulged on his bronze forehead, tree after tree of the great North Woods fell before him; while with each successive tap! the strokes of his massive forefinger steadily laid waste page after page of God's great out-of-doors.

"James Oliver Curwood!" ejaculated Dick in amazement. "I *thought* I'd read this forest before somewhere!" he murmured.

"Oh, it's the same old forest", sighed Mr. Curwood, pushing back his green eye shade and lighting a cigar

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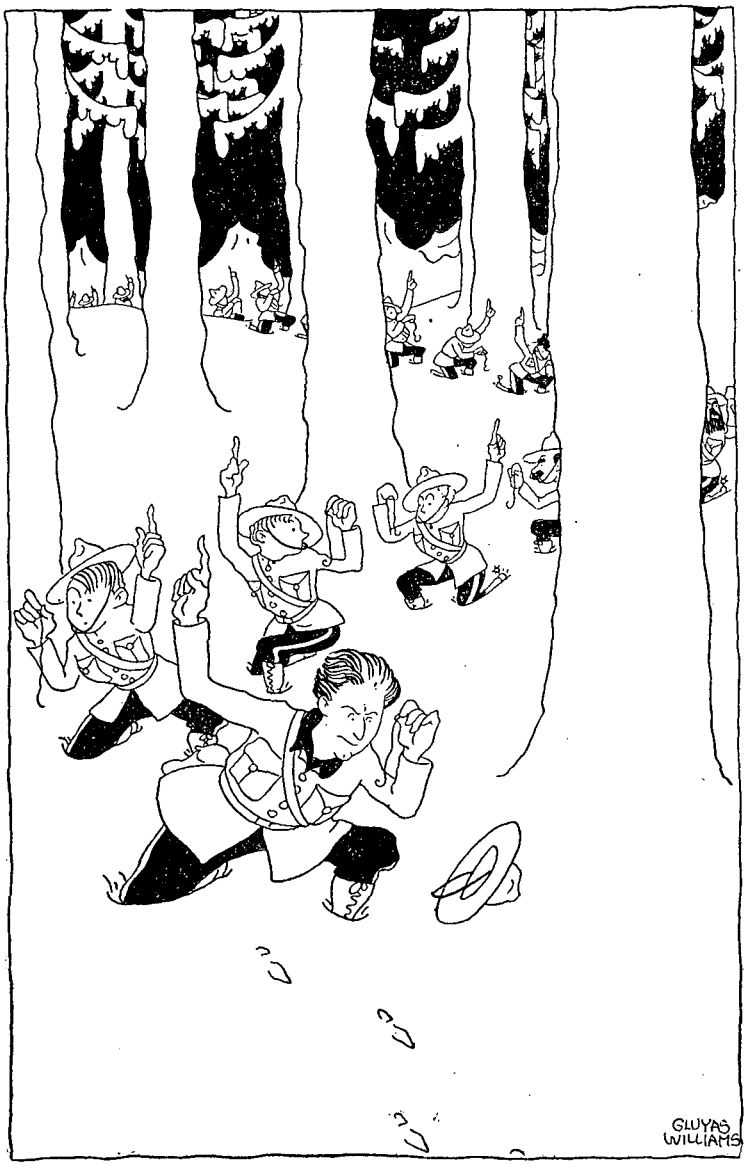

Behind them for miles extended the long arm of the law.

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sadly. "I used it in 'River's End' and 'God's Country' and all the rest of them — Curse its treacherous heart!" he cried, "Curse the black mystery of it, the slumbering hidden secrets which it presses close to its bosom, the immutability of its midnight depths, the —"

"We've come to help you out", offered Dick generously.

"Hurray for the Rollo Boys!" burst Mr. Curwood gratefully, tossing his description in the air and cheering lustily. "Well, Boys, something terrible has happened", he began. "It's a long story —"

"That's the trouble when you're paid space", put in Tom merrily; and even Mr. Curwood had to snicker a little at that one. Tom's ready wit had already made quite a name for him in one way or another, chiefly the latter.

"We had reached the next to the last chapter, Marette and I", continued Mr. Curwood. "There was no time to lose; the man hunters were on my track, I could not explain my plot to them or it would spoil the story. We had no choice. We set off together — Marette and I —" his voice broke, and he sharpened it again in silence — "off through the impenetrable forest, reaching beyond the rim of civilization itself, extending on and on—"

"I know", interrupted Dick. "We've just been through all that ourselves."

"And there," sobbed Mr. Curwood, "there it happened. Somewhere in that interminable description, somewhere in that endless tangle of sentences and phrases through which no man can ever hope to make his way — somewhere in that hopeless mass of words — I lost Marette!"

For some moments after his amazing confession there was a dead silence. The tragedy of it! — to have been so near the final chapter, with relief for the reader almost in sight — and then — *he lost Marette!* There was no getting around it. *He lost Marette!* You could put it backward and say that *Marette lost he!*, but the idea would be there just the same. Even if you turned your head on one side and half shut your eyes, or bent over and looked at it upside down between your legs, you would have to admit it sooner or later. *He lost Marette!*

"Tell me, old pal", Dick asked huskily, leaning forward so that in both his hands he held one of Mr. Curwood's. "Where did you — lose her?"

"There", sobbed Mr. Curwood, pointing to his typewriter. "Oh, I've looked everywhere since. I've rewritten every inch of forest; I've combed God's country for that Woman. My Marette —" And a dry sob rose in his throat like a great fist, like somebody's knee, perhaps like a man named Francis J. Heebers sitting down; and Dick's hands gripped closer. "We shall help you find her", he whispered hoarsely. "Take it from me — Cur!"

CHAPTER SEVEN

But how? How? The Rollo Boys all bit their lips except Harry, who had been promised that five dollar gold piece if he didn't bite his lip until he was twenty one.

"I've got it!" exclaimed Tom suddenly, leaping to his feet in his excitement. "If the heroine is lost somewhere between the first and last chapters, we can simply trail her back through the intervening chapters till we find her again!"

"Hurray!" shouted Mr. Curwood enthusiastically; and donning the cos-

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tumes of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, the Rollo Boys set out to get their Woman.

"Can you describe the girl, sir?" requested Tom, taking out his note-book and listening attentively.

"Marette —" Mr. Curwood leaned back dreamily and lit his cigar again — "I can see her now — those velvety, shimmering, sable coils — those glorious, smothering, raven curls — they fell about her in wet, shining masses, they clung to her face, her neck, her shoulders, her knees, her ankles, they spread over the floor, they climbed the trellis outside the house and bumble bees flitted in and out amid the blooms, and at night we would walk beneath the overhanging bower — Marette and I! Ah, the scent of those sable locks —"

"Thank you", said Tom, closing his notebook politely. "I'd recognize her in a minute", he added, as they started up the rear of the preceding chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

Up the steep mountainside of ice and snow crawled the three Rollo Boys and Mr. Curwood, who crept on his hands and knees, his head forward, his nostrils distended with the thrill of the chase, sniffing eagerly, tracking Marette by the scent of her hair. Now he would seize a strand of sable lock from a bank of snow, where it had fallen, press it to his lips, enter the number and length in a small note-book, and then throw it away again.

"Ah, that perfume-whose-name-I-shall-never-know!" he breathed, as he pressed on thru the novel in search of the next hair.

And behind them for miles extended the long arm of the law on its hands and knees, creeping, sniffing, examining each successive hair, making a note of it, and passing on again, as they followed the Rollo Boys and Mr. Curwood up the hill. Suddenly Dick Rollo sprang forward with a cry, and picked up the fragments of a broken bottle from the snow. "Marette's!" he said, noting her name on the tag.

"Poison?" hissed Mr. Curwood, wiping the perspiration from his forehead.

"No; Herpicide", read Dick from the label. "'Good for Falling Hair.'"

Swiftly Mr. Curwood pressed the broken glass to his nostrils. "That scent!" he cried, sniffing eagerly. "I have traced it at last!" And without further ado, he ran swiftly toward the preceding chapter, with the Rollo Boys in hot pursuit.

CHAPTER FIVE

"Hark! What is that rumbling sound?" exclaimed Tom suddenly, as they entered the rear of the fifth chapter and rushed forward in the direction of the sound. To their utter amazement they discovered a gigantic landslide of rocks and dirt retreating rapidly backward up the side of the mountain

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with a terrible roar, while trees and shrubs sprang up in its wake. As the roar dwindled and the dirt settled down quietly into place at the tops of the crag the entire mountainside gradually resumed its former appearance.

"Well, I'm glad that slide is over", heaved Dick with a sigh of relief.

"It isn't over", sighed Mr. Curwood, as they continued on their way toward the front of the book. "It hasn't even begun yet."

"Why, we might have been killed", gasped Harry.

"You *were* killed", replied Mr. Curwood sadly. "That was my climax", he sighed as they continued toward chapter four.

CHAPTER FOUR

"Tom! Dick!" cried Harry as he entered the last paragraph of chapter four, and halted in astonishment. "Look at the dead bear!"

"Not a moment too soon!" remarked Mr. Curwood as he cleaned the smoking barrel of his revolver.

"But you haven't shot him yet!" cried Dick in bewilderment.

Curwood had not moved. He was like one petrified. His hands had tightened about the gun until they were bloodless. His lips were parted. He was breathing quickly, but he did not smile. And as he stood there, uttering no word, for once, the demands of that vast responsibility that had been lifted from him and of the great fight that lay behind him pounded within him like naked fists.

Bang! went his gun; and then, so suddenly that he startled himself, he raised his gun — and fired.

Slowly the bulk of that great brute in the snow stirred, as it regained its feet, its flanks heaving, and staggering it trotted backwards into the forest ahead and was lost to view. And again they set out thru the snow, which slowly drifted upwards toward the sky in large flakes, gradually leaving the ground bare as they plodded toward the chapter before this one.

CHAPTER THREE

Below them, flooded in the illusive sun-mist, beside a shimmering brook and close to the shore of the lake, yet equally near the base of the mountain on which they were standing, combining surf bathing with mountain climbing and only a ten minute walk from the station, there stood in this fertile valley a tiny bungalow — alone (a. & adv.) empty, solitary, deserted; without company. *2.* Only; solely.

Suddenly backwards from that door rushed twelve Royal Northwest Mounted Policemen; backwards, nor turning their heads, they disappeared into the forest. There was silence. Then the door slammed again, and from the bungalow trotted a man and girl, running backwards in the direction of their disappearing pursuers.

"The Police are after them", explained Mr. Curwood, as the retreating couple greeted each other and rushed away in opposite directions.

"Marette!" called the man as he disappeared, "where are you?"

Slowly the sun sank in the East.

CHAPTER TWO

As they drew nearer the second chapter the Rollo Boys and Mr. Curwood grew conscious of a dull, droning mur-

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mur like a descriptive paragraph, a sound that with each step grew into a more distinct, cataract-like roar. It was the River. But Mr. Curwood did not dread it. It was *his* River; he had written it; it belonged to him. It grew in his ears, in his imagination. In it there was the clink of cracked ice, the hiss of vichy water; sprigs of mint and sliced lemon sped by on the swift current, and there was over all the faint aroma of orange-blossoms. And he cried out in a great hope. For it was here he had lost — Marette!

"Marette — my little goddess — my heroine —"

The rocks of the Lower Passage rose in his way, as the swift current carried him upstream, past them, beating like living things, tormenting, destroying. A wall of froth — he caught a glimpse of Marette's hair, then a white arm — thirty — twenty — ten feet ahead of him. In less time than it takes to tell, which is some comfort, her white body shot towards him, her hands grasped the rock—the buckskin thong held!

"We must jump for it!" he cried. He could not lose! It was inconceivable! Impossible! In a Curwood novel, anyway. And while the Rollo Boys stared in astonishment there floated toward them the cracked and broken carcass of the boat. Under Mr. Curwood's feet it assembled, and floated upstream toward the head of the channel — toward Athabasca Landing — and safety.

Mr. Curwood grasped Marette, and their lips met in a lingering embrace — warm, living, breathing lips. Then slowly her hand reached up and touched his face. "Jeems", she said, and there was a little tremble in her voice, "you may — kiss me, Jeems."

CHAPTER ONE

Now familiar paragraphs, sentences and phrases loomed up out of the mist and sped past them as they advanced backwards, and he recognized the first chapter at last. In his arms lay the woman; her hair was in his eyes, his nose, his mouth, as she repeated: "Jeems — Jeems —"

"No wonder I lost her", grumbled Mr. Curwood, as the Rollo Boys panted up to join him. "Her hair was falling — too late for Herpicide — and in the last chapter —", his voice faltered, "she had it bobbed!"

"Kiss me, Jeems — my Jeems — and take me away —"

"Where?" cried Mr. Curwood, seizing his typewriter and glancing about.

"To the Valley of Silent Men!" suggested Tom Rollo merrily, and Mr. Curwood tossed his typewriter into the Athabasca River and agreed enthusiastically.

"Three rousing cheers for the Rollo Boys!" sighed the relieved Royal Northwest Mounted Policemen.

The cheers were given with a will; but the contents of that will and how it affected the fortunes not only of our young heroes but also of the author and his publishers, will all be related in the next volume of this series, to be entitled: "The Rollo Boys Among the Privateers; or, How Sabatini Came to Cape Cod."

And here let us say Good-By.

Good-By.

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THE LITERARY AGENT

By Michael Joseph

THE literary agent is the most significant indication of the new relations between author and publisher. Publishing a book is a complicated business compared with the procedure of fifty years ago. Nowadays a book is a business in itself. Only a specialist can hope to understand all the ramifications of the business. With the complication of contracts, due to the growth in importance of outside rights in literary property, and the keen competition among publishers, only an expert can manipulate the one and take advantage of the other.

In bygone days the cordial relationship which existed between author and publisher was founded on the simplicity of their business dealings. Experience has clearly shown that when bargaining has to be done those friendly relations are jeopardized. The best of friends are liable to come to grief over business.

The agent has sometimes been described as the fifth wheel on the literary coach. He has been accused of destroying the harmonious relationship between author and publisher, but in some respects the exact opposite is nearer the truth. The author without an agent is at a disadvantage in fixing terms with his publisher, unless he is satisfied to leave everything to the publisher's discretion, and that is obviously a dangerous practice. The author, whose business interests are represented by an agent, is enabled, on the other hand, to maintain his friendship with the publisher to the satisfaction of all parties, including even the agent himself. Indeed, I know authors who leave things entirely to their agents, congratulate them warmly when an improvement in terms is secured, then call on their publishers and mildly deprecate the rapacity of their agents, knowing they can afford to be magnanimous — after the contract is signed.

It is, on the whole, a very satisfactory working arrangement. The author certainly benefits; the agent's services are adequately rewarded; and the publisher appreciates the advantage of dealing with a man who understands the business and can come straight to the point. Moreover, the modern publisher realizes that, although he may thereby have to pay the author more, the agent is, or can be, as valuable to him as to the author. Only the short sighted publisher resents the development of literary agency.

In the first place, the publisher who tried to deal with all his authors personally, in the old fashioned way, would have to restrict his business considerably. The agentless author would scarcely know where he stood with all the different rights in his book, and would naturally and frequently come to his publisher to find out. The agent is on the author's side of the fence, and can and does explain all the various complications satisfactorily. In the old days the author went to see his publisher if any question arose in connection with his books; today he goes to see his agent.

Secondly, the agent saves the publisher a great deal of time and labor by

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sifting the wheat from the chaff among manuscripts beforehand. The eternal bane of publishers' lives is the vast quantity of impossible manuscripts submitted to them daily. To some extent the agent alleviates this burden. When a manuscript arrives in the publisher's office, bearing the imprint of a well known agent, the publisher knows that it has already passed the agent's often severe test of eligibility. But the agent's name on a manuscript is not necessarily any guarantee that it will appeal to every publisher. Tastes differ so profoundly that it is not surprising for an agent to be enthusiastic over a manuscript which makes little or no appeal to publishers. It is important to remember that there are very few agents who really count, and it is only their labels which make a favorable impression.

Indeed, the imprint of a second rate agent is of no value to the author whatever, since the publisher probably knows from experience that that particular agent's judgment is not to be trusted. Most of the authors whose names are known to the public are represented by the few first class literary agents whose names do carry some weight.

It is a well known fact that nearly every author of note is today represented by an agent. The value of the agent's services to the author is so obvious that at this stage it may surely be taken on trust. Now the publisher's profits depend directly on authors; and if he wants new authors in his list — and what publisher does not? — he is not so foolish as to alienate the influential agent. The wise publisher establishes friendly relations with those agents — I repeat that they are not many in number — who can sell him the books he wants.

The agent usually works on a commission basis, generally ten per cent of all money received by him on behalf of the author. This is the only fee charged by the reputable agent, and covers the negotiation of the manuscript, the settlement of terms, the preparation of the contract, and the collection of money due to the author.

Those agents who charge "reading fees" are to be avoided, since, whatever they may say to the contrary, all are fish that come to their net; whereas the honorable agent cannot afford to handle manuscripts for which he does not honestly see a prospective market. The agent who works on a payment by results basis is obviously unlikely to negotiate a manuscript unless he believes he can place it, for, if he does not succeed in selling the manuscript he positively loses money in the form of time, labor, postage expenses, and so forth, by handling it, since he receives nothing from the author.

Unfortunately, writers are so lamentably ignorant of the ways of the literary world that a large number of unscrupulous agents are able to make money out of them. By carefully worded advertisements they induce the unwary young author to submit his manuscripts. They charge a "nominal" reading fee; they diplomatically suggest that his manuscript should be retyped (by themselves); they offer to criticize or revise the manuscript. In plain English, their first consideration is not to make money for, but out of, the author. I do not suggest that because an agent charges reading fees he is necessarily dishonorable, in fact to charge a reading fee is logical enough; nor do I deny that the assistance of an expert in revising or criticizing manuscripts is a valuable service and as such is entitled to be paid for. But, human nature being what it is, there is no doubt that many unscrupulous in-

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dividuals continue to exploit the inexperienced writer.

The reputable agent is often as hard to satisfy as the publisher himself. Since the prosperity of his business depends on results, he is naturally not prepared to handle more than that proportion of the manuscripts submitted to him which appears likely to yield results. Consequently it does not follow that the agent will undertake to handle any manuscript. It has to be read before judgment can be pronounced on it, and if the agent can see no market for it, it must perforce be returned to the author. In one important literary agency known to the writer, the average of rejected manuscripts is over 85 per cent: that is to say, less than fifteen manuscripts out of every hundred submitted are retained for negotiation.

The value of the agent to the author has been triumphantly demonstrated by experience, but its exact nature is not always clearly understood. Let us first consider the main advantages to the author of employing an agent.

First, there are so many potential new markets that the author can only hope to reach them by enlisting the services of an expert. It needs a specialist to cover all the ground. Few writers even know what these markets are and what is their relative importance, but it is the literary agent's business. He is in daily touch with the ever changing markets for the author's work. Even in the comparatively straightforward task of disposing of certain rights only, e.g., the volume rights in the English language for the British Empire, the agent knows what publishers are likely to be interested. He is, as a rule, in close personal touch with publishers and knows what kind of books they want, as well as what they do not want, and when they want them, and what terms they are likely to pay. Many publishers make a point of informing the leading agents from time to time of their particular requirements. The situation is constantly changing. The book a publisher may not want in January he will eagerly buy in September. If an author were to try to keep in close touch with his markets and thus dispense with the agent, he would find he had no time left to write any books at all. There are, it is true, a number of authors who are in frequent and personal contact with publishers and editors, and to them the agent may seem less useful than to the ordinary author.

The author who lunches and dines with publishers and editors is apt to think that he is saving a ten per cent agent's commission by doing his business direct, and, as he thinks, probably with as much if not more benefit to himself. But what a short sighted policy this is! What of all the other markets for his work? Film rights, translation rights, different territorial rights throughout the world, broadcasting rights — all these potentially valuable properties may be lost or depreciated as a result of a contract between author and publisher direct. Not that the publisher is the wicked spider who entices the unwary author into his web; publishers themselves do not always understand the ramifications of the commercial side of literature today. This is proved by the large number of publishers who engage an international literary agent to represent *their* interests in the various rights they may have acquired outside their province.

The average writer is naturally disinclined to attend to the business side of his work. The agent, in addition to relieving him of the burden of business details, often contributes to his success

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as an author by protecting him from the harassing experience of continual rejections. The author's temperament is an important factor, and many an author who has eventually made good could not have worked so cheerfully and optimistically in the earlier stages of his career had it not been for careful nursing at the hands of his agent. The wise agent is more than a business representative; he is, or should be, as it were, a literary godfather. Although literary agency is still a comparatively young institution, there are already on record many instances of loyal and long standing friendships between author and agent, and this relationship is in a sense more valuable to the author than that with his publisher. There can never be any conflict of interest between author and agent as there is often between author and publisher. The agent's interest is identical with his author's.

The ideal literary relationship is the trinity of author, publisher, and agent, when all three parties like and trust each other implicitly. At first sight it may appear that the author with an agent need not have any dealings with his publisher, but there are many points on which it is better for author and publisher to consult independently of the agent. The experienced agent realizes this. No author should be entirely a stranger to his publisher. The dictum "Discuss business matters with your agent, literary matters with your publisher" is worth remembering in this connection, although it is misleading. Why should literary matters not be discussed with the agent? True, in business matters the author doesn't as a rule speak the language, and the agent has to act on his behalf. But in literary matters the experienced agent should certainly be taken into the confidence of both author and publisher.

Although it is true that the established agent is on friendly terms with the majority of publishers, it is a mistake to imagine that the fact that a manuscript is submitted by an agent influences in any way the publisher's decision. So keen are publishers to discover new talent that they give as much attention to the promising manuscript submitted direct by an unknown author as to one sent in under the imprint of a leading agent. While it is more probable that the agent knows better which publisher may be expected to be interested in the book, the unknown author is at no disadvantage when the manuscript comes up for decision. It is equally a mistake to believe, as some writers apparently do, that an agent can succeed where they themselves have failed. An agent is not a miraculous person who can persuade a publisher to accept a manuscript just because he, and not the author, submits it. In this respect, the value of the agent is often greatly exaggerated, as the agent himself would be the first to admit.

It is when a publisher signifies his willingness to publish a book that the agent most emphatically justifies his existence. If a book is up to publication standard, finding a publisher for it is not so difficult as outsiders imagine; but when terms have to be discussed and a contract drafted, the agent reaches his high water mark of utility to the author.

After the contract has been signed, various points are liable to arise in connection with the format and general production of the book. These the author can generally settle most satisfactorily by dealing direct with the publisher. There is no advantage to be gained, unless for instance the author lives abroad, by using the agent merely as a mouthpiece. When the book is

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actually published, however, the agent once more becomes active. In the collection of money due and the scrutiny of publishers' accounts the agent's services are most valuable to the author.

Does every author need an agent? This is a difficult question to answer, since every author is a law unto himself. Generally speaking, the agent is most useful to the established author, since there is more scope for bargaining than in the case of the new writer, and more international rights to be disposed of. As a rule the beginner would do better, I think, to approach at any rate *editors* direct. Most writers embark on short stories or articles to begin with, and with work *of this kind* it is not of much advantage to employ an agent, at any rate in the early stages of the writer's career. Later on, when he begins to find his work in print with increasing frequency, the author can profitably approach an agent. In fact the agent can rarely be of service in dealing with articles and short stories by new writers. He knows the market more intimately; it is true, but no young writer can hope for success unless he is himself more or less definitely aware beforehand of the likely markets for his work. Experience soon teaches that it is useless from a practical point of view to write an article or even a short story unless one already has some knowledge of the requirements of editors. It is like shooting without looking at the target.

The agent himself, reasonably enough, is as a rule enthusiastic about the early efforts of beginners only when they are of outstanding merit. Even then it is sometimes a profitable policy to advise the young author to learn to walk on his own legs and to enlist the agent's support only when he has made some progress. He will then be able to appreciate the agent's services. Most well known authors will testify that their first appearances in print were the result of their approaching *editors* direct; and that the employment of an agent was a subsequent and inevitable step in their literary careers.

The foregoing remarks apply only to early articles and short stories, which are very seldom the subject of a contract. A book, on the other hand, is generally better handled by an agent than by the author direct, partly because there is more scope for negotiation and also because the contract should have expert supervision.

There is still, of course, a certain body of opinion among publishers hostile to the literary agent. In a sense this is natural enough; but the publisher who resents the intrusion of the agent on the ground that the author, as a result, earns more and the publisher less, is a poor sort of publisher. What has really happened is that agents have sprung into being mainly as a result of the development of foreign and other new rights, and of conditions which called for the protection of authors' interests generally. Without agents who fully understand the commercial side authors would be in a sorry plight. Although, of course, there have been several instances of rapacity on the part of agents, I think the sensible agent realizes that, while it is his primary duty to get the best of terms and prices in the market, he must not kill the goose from which the golden royalties are expected. It is also part of his job to adjust and preserve that nice balance of interests between author and publisher which is so necessary to the successful outcome of their partnership. The agent should know better than to risk spoiling the market.

Another objection to agents, and one for which there are many sound reasons, is the not uncommon practice of playing off one publisher against another in nego-

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tiating an author's work. Such auction methods are indefensible. It is doubtful, however, whether any agent who values his reputation would adopt such methods. Price isn't everything. An increased advance or a royalty does not in itself justify an agent in taking an author from one publisher to another.

Nowadays the influential agent is in a peculiarly favorable position. Publishers and editors, being anxious to secure the authors and contributions they want, are constantly reminding the agent of their requirements. The agent is usually in the position of having more openings for sales than he has material to supply. For the right kind of work there is in fact considerably more demand than supply. It cannot too often be emphasized that there is, relatively, a scarcity of salable work. So large a proportion of the work of writers generally is merely wasted effort, and consequently unmarketable, that the average author frequently loses sight of the fact that there is a genuine scarcity of acceptable work.

Should an author have a form of contract between himself and his agent? This naturally depends upon the usual practice of the agent. As with publishers, it often happens that the agent who steers the author over the rough and difficult ground of his early days has the subsequent mortification of seeing that author desert him in favor of another agent, who undeservedly gathers the fruits of his less fortunate competitor's labor. To avoid thus laboring in vain, some agents expect their authors to sign a form of contract.

The best type of agent, however, prefers to bind his authors solely by good will. It is the agent's business to satisfy his authors, and provided that they continue to be satisfied, he relies upon their continued loyalty to him with the dawning of more prosperous days. In practice this policy is on the whole successful. Authors as a race are loyal creatures, and only an unworthy minority will desert the agent who serves them faithfully and well in their struggling days in favor of another, unless they have good reason for dissatisfaction.

Today there can be no doubt of the desirability of the useful agent as a literary institution. The oldtime prejudice has practically disappeared. There are of course still some people who sincerely oppose a development which tends still further to commercialize literature. But it is inevitable. The agent who knows his job is an asset to the publishers and of inestimable, if varying, value to authors. Generally speaking, it cannot be denied that the rise of the literary agent has given a big impetus to the monetary return to authors for their work.

The agent has, in fact, a serious responsibility, and with the growth of his power, an increasing responsibility. Authors, publishers, and agents themselves should recognize this truth. It is especially important that agents themselves should not abuse their increasingly influential position. Everyone with the cause of literature at heart should strive to eliminate the pest of the undesirable agent, at the same time recognizing the undubitable value of the good agent. For when the agent *is* good, he is very, very good; but when he is bad, he is indeed horrid.

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CURRENT SHORT STORIES

By Gerald Hewes Carson

THE BEST SHORT STORIES

The following ten short stories are selected for special mention as mirroring the best elements in current fiction as it has appeared between May and July. When the stories selected are not by American authors they are, nevertheless, the work of writers who are important influences upon our own creative effort.

When Hell Froze. W. D. Steele. HARPER'S, May.

The Return. Sherwood Anderson. CENTURY, May.

Native Stock. T. S. Stribling. PICTORIAL REVIEW, July.

The Crucifix. Elsie Singmaster. WOMAN'S HOME COMPANION, June.

The Hill. Tupper Greenwald. MIDLAND, June.

The Flood. Konrad Bercovici. GOOD HOUSEKEEPING, July.

In the Lobby. Zona Gale. CENTURY, July.

The Field of Mustard. A. E. Coppard. DIAL, July.

Salt of the Earth. Elsie Singmaster. LADIES' HOME JOURNAL, May.

The Mole. John Metcalfe. DOUBLE DEALER, June.

ONE type of short story which never seems to become exhausted is that loosely described as the mystery story, the crime or detective story. Its vitality is the more noteworthy because its chief aim, its identifying quality, is nothing more nor less than its devilish ingenuity.

This kind of story exerts a great fascination. Its literary significance is equivalent perhaps to that of the crossword puzzle. It seldom affords a recognizable or interesting portrait of a human being. Dealing frequently with the materials of the life about us, it shamelessly tosses those materials into the melodramatic postures of absurd artifice. What it does is to create a more or less impossible situation, pose a dilemma which the reader is piqued to solve, but cannot.

How does the author extricate himself? That is the nub of the matter. The whole piece is pointed toward the moment of recapitulation, and it is really for that moment that magazine readers devour thousands of words, and it is backward from that moment, as coy authors occasionally reveal to us, that such stories are frequently created, or more properly, built.

Yet for all of this, the detective story has its persuasive and engaging practitioners. One of them is Mr. G. K. Chesterton, who combines business with pleasure in presenting from time to time "Father Brown", a hero of the Catholic church, one of the great amateur detectives of modern times. Father Brown's chief strength and reliance lie not in his skill with the reading glass and dark lantern, nor yet with the scientific trumpery of modern criminology, but in his ineffable comprehension of the human heart. That is to say, Father Brown, duly reflecting his creator, is a mystic and a specialist in motives.

The Marquis of Marne, center of interest in Mr. Chesterton's "The

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Chief Mourner of Marne" (Harper's, May), was a hermit, brooding, secretive, said to be priest ridden. There had been a duel in his early life with his well beloved cousin. James had killed Maurice; James's life was thought to be a penance.

Father Brown, however, discovered that Marne was in hiding not because of what he was, but of *who* he was. The duel had been jobbed. It was Maurice who had really survived, assuming the name and guise of James.

In his "The Song of the Flying Fish" (Harper's, June) Mr. Chesterton begins with the theft of some artificial fish, rare and precious *curiosa*. Father Brown's lucid genius for penetrating stubborn human fibre again triumphs. It is important to notice here that one's interest lies not only in the fact that he solved it, but in his recapitulation where he takes the reader by the hand and threads the maze with him.

Mr. Harvey O'Higgins has a skill in these matters which compares well with Mr. Chesterton's, though his sense of literary form and style is perhaps less sure than that of the rotund and versatile British journalist. Mr. O'Higgins's puppet is a detective named Duff. One of Duff's exploits is recounted in "James Illinois Bell" (Red Book, June). Duff trips up the gentleman whose name the story bears, just as the latter prepares to work vengeance upon a dead woman by falsely swearing to her daughter that he is her — in a casual way — father. Duff, being also a sleuth for human motives as well as facts, is successful in finding out not only how Bell had lived his life but why. That, it happens, is more than the unfortunate gentleman knew himself, and in the dénouement we are allowed to sit in and learn about Bell at the same time he learns about himself.

The reverse twist upon this sort of story is, of course, to enlist the reader's sympathy with the clever criminal; and to endow him with all the admirable qualities of intelligence, courage, and resourcefulness. An example is Irvin S. Cobb's "The Black Duck" (Cosmopolitan, July); another, Florence M. Pettie's "The Crystal Vampire" (Munsey's, June).

The latter story deals with a charming girl criminal. She responded poignantly to beauty in all forms, particularly diamonds. So strong was her feeling for this sort of thing that she successfully planned and executed the theft from a metropolitan jeweler of a magnificent diamond. Mr. Cobb's story has the artistic touch of irony he likes so well. His crook escapes successfully, only to be trapped when he yields for one fatal moment to a superstition, to a weakness within himself. In "Legerdemain" (McClure's, May) by Mortimer Levitan, the robber is robbed. A professional jewel thief is jailed. When he emerges he finds that his wife has flown to other arms, and, what he finds as worse, has given another man the secret of his technique in the pleasant business of getting something for nothing. Did he requite them? He did. That is the story.

In these stories the type broadens out. The interest does not lie in the challenge of how a particular situation is to be unravelled but in the high color, the mood of excitement, tension and escapade which pervade them. That is true also of Percival Gibbon's fantastic story of international intrigue, "The Man of Science" (Saturday Evening Post, June 20), in which a German professor and a group of rascals from all nations prepare to levy tribute upon humanity for immunity from a horrible, scientifically propagated death.

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They were foiled. And even in this sinister atmosphere Mr. Gibbon contrived to make two young hearts blossom, as only they can blossom, one sometimes feels, in a spring number of the "Post".

Richard Connell's "The Fourth Degree" (Saturday Evening Post, June 6) despite the fact that it is a thriller is different in this respect, that it has an idea. The scheme is to show that when it comes to horrors, the unknown is infinitely more terrifying and destructive than the known. Mr. Connell first shows an innocuous gentleman of the academic cloth being beat to a pulp by a detective who still fails to gain his end. Then the situation reverses itself. The professor, having the detective in his power, obtains a confession of murder from the latter without any other suasion than the power of dread.

II

A certain melancholy interest attaches to the promising story which doesn't quite come off. The author's artistic intention is clear. The execution has its moments. But the performance as a whole is uneven, wobbly.

Three stories in particular call this to mind, all by Myron Brinig. In the first, "Thicker Than Water" (Munsey's, May), and, indeed, also in the other two, the scene is the copper country of Montana. A Montana mother discovers a long missing son, only to find that he has been, or seems to have been, guilty of mortally wounding her other son. Some of the writing is excellent. But the long arm of circumstance is stretched too far.

"The Piano" (Munsey's, July) deals in symbols. In an immigrant Jewish family it so happens that to one son the old family piano is the symbol of the things that are vital and beautiful; to the other it is the automobile. The theme is so good that the story needed restraint, and that Mr. Brinig did not have. The dialogue is schematic, and the piece as a whole lacks texture and distinction.

But most ambitious of Mr. Brinig's stories is "Fear God and Take Your Own Part" (Pictorial Review, June) which celebrates the love of a Jewish father for his son and his hero worship of Colonel Roosevelt. The coming of the Great War precipitates a triangular struggle in the old Jewish father between love, loyalty, and idealism. But it is rampant sentimentality which carries the day.

Barry Benefield does the same thing in "Guard of Honor" (Pictorial Review, July) in which the old veteran, Goldie; the young veteran, Willie Ott; and Honey Boy, the village half-wit, all mount guard on Memorial Day over the Confederate graves in an Arkansas cemetery.

To these stories should be contrasted Zona Gale's "Lovell's Gilded Hell" (Woman's Home Companion, May) and "The Return" (Century, May) by Sherwood Anderson, because these two stories are built upon a theme rich in possibilities for sentimentality—the return of the native to his early haunts—and because in each there is such a deft restraint, a mood clear cut and lucid.

The list could easily be lengthened: "In the Lobby" (Century, July), another of Miss Gale's stories; "When Hell Froze" (Harper's, May) by W. D. Steele, who deserves, but still lacks a claque; two by Elsie Singmaster—"The Crucifix" (Woman's Home Companion, June) and "Salt of the Earth" (Ladies' Home Journal, May), the latter story representing almost the high level of Miss Singmaster's achievement.

The point where sentiment, a fine thing rightly used, ceases to be legitimate

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and—if I may bring a new word to the uses of criticism—convincing should not be difficult to perceive. The whole question is one of truth, truth to human motive and emotion. It does not matter whether the literary artist acquires a sense of emotional truth (which also means emotional decorum) through the delicacy of his own intuitive faculties or through the breadth of his living; but he should acquire it. He must acquire it. Though the inveterate sentimentality of American taste makes false sentiment profitable, there is surely no writer with an intellectual conscience who has any illusions about the critical acumen of democracies.

THAT YEAR—

By Charles Norman

SOME day, someone will come and say, "She's dead";
And I will stare a while and say no word,
And I will silent be for all I've heard,
But I will turn away, or bow my head.
And I will be as one, who, stricken dumb
For loveliness no longer in his reach,
Still feels within the surge of ancient speech,
And I will know she hears me and will come.
And walking down a lane where flowers blow,
The old springs will glow sudden in my mind;
I shall remember her, I know, I know!
And so forget death came and was unkind.
And I shall only know that she is there
When lilac petals stain the evening air.

The earth will be more beautiful that year,
The hills will blossom lovelier for this,
And I will have forgotten what death is,
Viewing that richer beauty with her near.
Lavender veils will deck the twilight air;
Slim elms will grieve for stars beyond their tips;
The wind will croon with her familiar lips,
And I will feel the perfume of her hair.
I never knew before how death can be
So rare! I almost long to hear one say
That she will nevermore come back to me,
And nevermore will my love pass this way;
Seeing her death will crown the lovely earth
With loveliness more fair for this new birth.

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RING W. LARDNER'S BELL LETTRES

By Grant Overton

With a Portrait by Bertrand Zadig

NOT alluding any in the title of this article to the letters Ring W. Lardner writes every week for newspaper syndication by the Bell Syndicate, would respectfully state that I have seen Mr. Lardner in regards to the *belles lettres* (French for pure literature) he has lately been named as writing.

His information is that the critics don't get him right yet.

Bell letters, he says, but bell me no *belles lettres*. He has had nothing to do with anything French beyond reading page proofs of F. Scott Fitzgerald's latest novel, Scott being in France and unable to read them, besides expensively cabling over whole sentences he wanted changed. Mr. Lardner states was able to save Scott from pulling many bones in the book, such as saying "the lower level" in the Long Island Railroad Station in the Pennsylvania Station, New York, N. Y., when as even Scott knows all the Long Island passengers is on the very lowest level anyway, and herded just like the animals, the only step below them in creation.

Lardner says Scott has written "The Great Gatsby" over three times, and it is close to greatness, with which I agreed, so we talked about that all the time that was left.

Ringold Wilmer Lardner was born in Niles, Michigan, March 6, 1885. He was named after a man. He is a Republican and an Episcopalian and a member of the Chicago Press, Chicago Automobile, New York Athletic, Lambs, Dutch Treat, North Hempstead Country, Soundview Golf, Players, Coffee House, and Coldstream Golf Clubs. I know another fellow who belongs to ten clubs and recently he was elected to the Century in New York and listened to them read the eulogies of deceased members.

Ring was graduated from the Niles high school and went to the Armour Institute of Technology in Chicago. After a spell as a reporter for the South Bend "Times" in Indiana he became a sports writer in Chicago for the "Inter Ocean", the "Examiner", and the "Tribune". He moved about some and married a Goshen, Indiana, girl in 1911, settling down on the Chicago "Tribune" 1913–19 and becoming a Bell syndicate writer in 1919. He has a fine place at Great Neck, Long Island, N. Y. — the "East Egg" of "The Great Gatsby" — and five or ten children whom he supports in the style to which they are gradually becoming accustomed.

He hates to work and he hates to come into New York, but will do same for the support of his family.

There being no other biographical facts extant, I will try and tell you about this fellow.

He stands high but can generally enter elevators without stooping and he has a handsome brown skin with red tones in it. That skin does its best to make him a handsome looker. He has black, heavy, extra size but regular eyebrows and this shiny black straight hair in an up-to-date haircut, and his

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Ring W. Lardner

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head is ovoid. But the truly monumental thing about him is his repose. He has as much repose as a piece of granite. The strong modeling of his face suggests granite just as the skin makes you think of satin. He speaks in a low tone. He is unhurried. Practically — now that I never see anything any more of Frank M. O'Brien — the only quiet person in New York, Ring Lardner is the only noticeable and audible person in New York. The city ought to hire him to come to town oftener.

When Lardner began to write his letters of the pitcher from the bushes, "You Know Me, Al", people said he was a humorist, which was fair enough, as definitions go. Later, and especially with the appearance of "How to Write Short Stories", all the Algonquin braves raised the war cry that Lardner was a great satirist or ironist. For example, Gilbert Seldes, in "The Seven Lively Arts", says:

> Lardner began writing the letters of a busher just when the more serious magazines were exploiting the intellectual idea of "inside baseball". . . . Into this pretentious parade Mr. Lardner injected the busher — and baseball has never recovered. The busher was simply a roughneck and a fool, a braggart and a liar; he was on occasions a good ball-player, and he seemed to be inflated with the hot air which had been written about him.

And Seldes adds that Lardner "pricked the bubble".

I gather from this and some other comments that Gilbert and the rest picture Ring as one filled with a hatred for the baseball moron. The contrary is true. Lardner assures me that he loves said moron and will any time do even that thing he most detests, come into town, to spend an evening with one of these bush men and listen to their modish operandi.

"Champion", the story of a prize-fighter who made his way by knocking down his mother and double crossing his best friends, is something else again. Mr. Lardner got awful tired of seeing a big bum translated into a popular hero. Having been a sport writer himself, he knew all about the methods by which such deification is accomplished, including the press agent and the sporting writer who is on the fight promoter's payroll. The spectacle turned his stomach once too often, and "Champion", in the volume "How to Write Short Stories", was written.

Continuing the portrait, I meant to say something about Lardner's voice. It is dull, heavy, lifeless, inert; then something is brought up that interests him and a smile comes over that face like brief sunlight on a rockbound coast, and a curious warmth or coloring creeps into his voice as he speaks. Perhaps he starts a sentence with a word or two and definitely pauses for thirty seconds before he gets the rest out.

He thinks he could never write a novel. His choice of all the novels he has read, for greatness, is "The Peasants" by Ladislas Reymont. To him even the descriptions of the weather in this Polish tetralogue are thrilling. His favorite short story writer "of all time" is Katherine Mansfield.

Like most of us, Lardner has his own idea on the subject of humor — that is, certain things strike him as humorous although no more than anyone else is he prepared to define humor abstractly. His choice among humorists is Bugs Baer. Studying this and some examples from Lardner's own work, I suggested that, as much as anything, a divine inconsequence might be the humorous principle. He was disposed favorably toward this suggestion; but you can take it or leave it; it's no dogma.

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For what it may be worth, the principle of inconsequence may have some value toward appreciation of the three page plays in Lardner's latest volume, "What of It?". Such an affair as "I Gaspiri" (The Upholsterers) is verbal krazy kat. It either is, or is not, convincingly funny. Some reviewers have accounted for this stuff by saying that Lardner was satirizing the Moscow Art Theatre. He says not; says he was writing these conglomerations before he had seen or heard of the Moscow stuff. He is definitely interested in the theatre and the plays are among the very few things he enjoys writing.

He enjoys Gertrude Stein but the plays have no derivation in her work. Since they occupy only a few pages in one of his books, and are wholly senseless, I may seem to be stressing the plays too much. The reason I speak of them particularly is that Lardner has done, and wants to do, some things which he says are most unlikely to appeal to a syndicate editor or a magazine editor or a book publisher or readers or anybody. The reason he does not do these things is that they would not support his family. Most of them are undone.

Of course there are a few things lying around which he liked about as well as anything he has done but which the appointed judges of such matter said were rotten.

A thing which cost him more labor to the square inch, perhaps, than anything he has written was "The Golden Honeymoon" in "How to Write Short Stories". St. Petersburg, Florida, is a winter resort patronized by an extraordinary number of old people. Lardner wanted to write a story about it, but at that time he figured he knew next to nothing of writing a real, magazinable, marketable short story. He sweated like everything, but he had his reward, for "The Golden Honeymoon" was rejected by one weekly magazine, picked by Edward J. O'Brien for inclusion in "The Best Short Stories of 1924", and is now generally perceived to be, with "The Champion" and "Some Like Them Cold", a distinguished story in a book away above the ordinary.

If you inform Lardner that he is now a great ironist he will inquire dubiously: "What is irony?" 'S a fair question but unfortunately there is no answer. Apparently irony is some way of presenting a thing that makes it funny to the majority of readers, or thrilling, and at the same time gives the minority of readers the conviction that the author is being a very tough egg. If you are genuinely savage, as Thomas Hardy is in "Tess of the D'Urbervilles", or as Lardner is in "Champion", it isn't irony at all.

A kind of nice insincerity seems inseparable from irony.

Of course a compassionate feeling may take the place of the insincerity, or may be combined with it. To be insincere is not necessarily to be unkind.

Lardner is deeply and persistently fond of music, high and low — I mean high class and low life — and once when called upon to write a success story wrote on "My Success as a Song Writer". The article stated that he had spent a good deal of time and some money on this vocation. Ring figured out that the time spent, at ten cents an hour, alone represented an investment of something like $4,300. John Siddall could not see the story for "The American Magazine", and I don't think it has ever been published. Now is a piece like that irony or humor, or what? Seems to be a plain statement of facts.

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Without any question, at this point in this piece, I ought to begin a critical study of the author's work. These vivisections are kind of painful but are supposed to be necessary, as otherwise the reader might get interested in the author and start to read his stuff without any critical approach whatever.

As luck has it, I am able to fulfil this important part of my duty, as Maxwell Perkins of Charles Scribner's Sons has sent me a set of the Collected Edition of Lardner. I shall avoid mentioning almost everything of his not in the Collected Edition. You can see why.

The Edition begins with "You Know Me Al" (I see they leave the comma out of the title in this Edition). Jack Keefe, a baseball player, is the hero of this book. The whole thing is letters written by Jack to his Friend Al. In a preface written for the Edition in 1925, Lardner says that the original of Jack Keefe "is not a ball player at all, but Jane Addams of Hull House, a former Follies girl". This, with what Gilbert Seldes said about the book, lets me out and I pass on to —

"Gullible's Travels". Here we have a volume bound like the others in jade buckram and consisting of five Tales, one of which is used for the title of the book. The title story, as they say in Hollywood, is laid at Palm Beach, but as Mr. Lardner points out in his March, 1925, preface, the prices are all prewar prices. The remaining stories are "Carmen", "Three Kings and a Pair", "The Water Cure", and "Three Without, Doubled". The last named, strange to relate, is about auction bridge, or bridge as it is called simply by practised players.

Next on the right is "The Big Town" which so closely resembles a novel that I think Lardner perjures himself when he says he can't write one. Thanks to Gil Seldes I am able to quote these critical notes on the contents of "The Big Town: How I and the Mrs. Go to New York to See Life and Get Katie a Husband". Mr. Seldes:

> He has described a half-fatuous, half-hardheaded roughneck dragging his silly and scheming wife and sister-in-law through the hotels and apartments of the backwash of society, and the story grew more and more sardonic, more and more entertaining; little of the aimless, sickly, trivial life of the merely prosperous escaped him.

This is all right except that Seldes uses "grew" for "grows" and "escaped" instead of the present tense.

We now come to our author's magnetic opus, "How to Write Short Stories (with Samples)". This work, which has already gone through half a dozen editions, consists of ten short stories and a Preface signed "Ring Lardner, 'The Mange', Great Neck, Long Island, 1924".

Each story is prefaced by a little instruction. "The Golden Honeymoon" is "a story with 'sex appeal'" and "A Frame-Up" is "a stirring romance of the Hundred Years' War, detailing the adventures in France and Castile of a pair of well-bred weasels. The story is an example of what can be done with a stub pen."

You know about "The Golden Honeymoon" and "Champion", so it only remains for me to speak of the other one of the three arresting stories in this book. "Some Like Them Cold" is told entirely in letters exchanged by a girl in Chi and a fellow in New York. They had met for the first time in the station just as he was leaving Chi to make his fortune as a songwriter in New York, N. Y., and there seems to have been a bet that he (would) (would not) write to her, she taking the negative, he the affirmative. He writes under date of August 3 and the final letter is hers, dated September 27, by

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which time it is all off; he having graded out at a $60 a week orchestra job and having been vamped by an icicle, and she being brokenhearted and crying her eyes out between the lines of her letter, if you get her.

This is a fine short story, true to life and everything, and you feel sorry for Mabelle according to your station in life, if any.

The latest work by Ring W. Lardner now commands our undivided attention for a moment. Daringly called "What of It?" this book opens with a brief account of Europe, followed by the plays aforesaid. Then come four "'Bed-Time Stories'" and the rest of the book, namely 144 of the 220 pages, is filled up with "Obiter Dicta", or Otherwise Dictated.

So now I have done the job and have given you a critical approach to each volume of the Definitive Edition of Ring W. Lardner.

Edmund Wilson and regular critics like that, including Laurence Stallings, Burton Rascoe, H. L. Mencken, Sir James Barrie, Heywood Broun, and I guess everybody of any account, have summed up Lardner's qualities and merits. He has "a fluent and finished technique unusual among American writers" (Broun). "His stories are superbly adroit and amusing. No other contemporary American, sober or gay, writes better" (Mencken). Burton Rascoe puts Lardner with Sherwood Anderson and Willa Cather as the three Americans "who, at their best, are in the world's first rank of short-story writers". Edmund Wilson says that Lardner's "freshness" — not the slang sense — "and irony . . . convey the sense of a distinguished intelligence and an interesting temperament. He has an unexcelled, an almost unrivalled mastery of the American language." Barrie confesses to "immense entertainment" and adds, more simply, "He is the real thing." Stallings goes so far as to assert that "the man who really wants to understand the American people should begin his study with the works of Ring Lardner. *He* shows how they live, think, and feel."

I think some of these statements are apple-sauce. But I don't see how anyone can read much of Lardner without feeling the solid foundation on which they are, however insecurely, built.

Ring W. Lardner, in Person, as they say in the movie theatres, can be heard by consulting a short essay on "Sport" in a volume called "Civilization in the United States", by thirty Americans, published about four years ago. It is a short, swift treatise having many of the characteristics of John L. Sullivan's right and left. It notes that Americans prefer sitting in the grandstand to getting into the game. It also remarks upon the national tendency to make a hero out of anybody who can win — *à la* "Champion".

After all, Lardner is the fellow who wrote "'In Conference'", in his book "What of It?" and the fellow who refers casually to the Pullman car Gastritis — a buffet parlor car, no doubt. And Lardner is the guy who is liable to turn out a vital article tomorrow on "The Theory and Practice of Tea Room Nutrition".

Bibliography

1915 *Bib Ballads*
1915 *You Know Me Al*
1917 *Gullible's Travels*
1917 *Own Your Own Home*
1918 *Treat 'Em Rough*
1918 *The Real Dope*
1918 *My Four Weeks in France*
1919 *The Young Immigrunts*
1921 *Symptoms of Being 35*
1921 *The Big Town*
1924 *How to Write Short Stories (with Samples)*
1925 *What of It?*

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UNSEEN COLLABORATORS

Anonymous

MY first book was published the other day — under another man's name.

The other man is listed in "Who's Who" as a five time author of books. He wrote none of them. He isn't capable of it, and he knows it. But he *can* write his name to a check for almost any reasonable figure you care to mention and he hires others to write the books for which he claims the credit. Many others do the same thing, as I have occasion to know, but few of them go quite so far as he does.

There would be a sixth book in the list, if the person who really wrote it had not descended to gentle blackmail after it was in type and the illustrations made, and demanded an outrageous bonus under penalty of exposure. The old man destroyed the manuscript and canceled his order for the book's publication. It must have wrenched his soul to do that, for the book was on a subject which would have attracted attention and he had spent a large sum to get the material for it, although he did no work upon it himself. But having been blackmailed for other things, as he told me himself, he knew that the first payment, large as it was, probably would not be the last demanded.

It always has puzzled me how he managed to derive so much satisfaction from posing as an author and claiming books in which his share consisted almost altogether in deciding their subject and footing the bills. So little does he know of the profession of authorship that he was surprised when I told him that publishers do not expect an author to pay for getting out his book. The books which bear his name always have been published at his own expense and he also has paid for getting them before the public, although I believe that, produced through ordinary channels, they would have been favorably received on their merits.

Writing is a means of self expression to which untold numbers turn, and I know from experience what great pleasure is derived from it even though publication does not follow. But I fail to see how authorship by proxy acts as an outlet. To me a book written by another, which does not reflect my emotions or reveal my reactions, which does not convey my thoughts or speak my language, would be a poor thing to send out into the world to represent me. Instead of taking pride in it I should regard it as a badge of shame, reproaching me that I who felt the desire to write lacked the will to realize the desire.

In his own business my former employer has ability which amounts to genius. Starting with nothing, he has made a fortune. Yet he scarcely can write a letter. His early life precluded more than the most rudimentary schooling. His vocabulary is limited to a few hundred simple words in everyday use. Even in conversation he finds it difficult, almost impossible, to complete a sentence.

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You have to guess at what he wants to say much of the time. He cannot convey his thoughts to another. When it comes to writing it is just the same. A clever stenographer, closely in touch with his business affairs, takes his rambling comments on the matter under discussion, whips it into shape and submits it. If it says the thing he wanted to say he is pathetically grateful and signs it. If it does not, they try again.

I did not know these things when I agreed to visit a foreign land with him and help get out a book on it. I knew, of course, that his previous books were not wholly his own. In the prefaces he had acknowledged his indebtedness to the "secretary" who accompanied him, never the same one twice, but I had an idea that the books, to a large extent at least, recited his reactions to what he saw and heard.

Later I was to discover that he is not observant enough to gain more than a confused picture of anything and that he could impart virtually nothing of that picture to another. He tried it once or twice with me. Always it ended by his saying: "Well, you know what I mean. Fix it up." I didn't know what he meant but I fixed it up. I wrote my own experiences and reactions and let it go at that.

There were times when, reading it over, he would take exception to a word. To the best of my ability that word was the best to convey the exact shade of meaning I wanted and I could not for a long time understand why he seemed to attach so much importance to a single word. Then I discovered that was his way of finding out what that word meant. He didn't know and was ashamed to admit it. Sometimes to humor him I'd suggest some other word and we'd change it. Otherwise it went as originally written. He wasn't equal to a substitution himself.

Why he should have picked on travel books for which to get a literary reputation I can't imagine, except that he travels a great deal along the beaten tourist trails where he can keep in touch with the comforts of civilization. You'd never guess it from the books themselves. They hit only the high spots of those places everyone has seen, and deal mostly with the out-of-the-way corners. That is why, I think, my former employer is also listed in "Who's Who" as an explorer, but his exploring, like his writing, is done by proxy.

Some amusing incidents have resulted from that circumstance. One that the old man himself tells has to do with a previous book. Looking up the ways of getting to one of those little "banana republics" of the Southern Hemisphere, he balked at the hardships involved and sent his "secretary" alone. Before the secretary got around to writing up that particular country he got into a quarrel with the old man and departed for home.

For the purposes of the book it was essential that the republic be mentioned. The old man fell into the hands of a man in sympathy with one or another of the revolutionary factions down there, and his chapter on that tiny nation turned out a bit of propaganda for the writer's faction.

The book found its way to headquarters maintained in this country by the other faction. It was solemnly decided that the author had insulted their country. A delegation in frock coats and top hats called on him at his hotel. Expecting to be praised, perhaps decorated, he invited them to his room and — was served with a challenge to a duel!

Taken back as he was, the old man's

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wits were on the job. He invited the delegation to wait in the corridor while he obtained a second by means of the telephone. Then he locked the door, left by way of the fire escape, and for months after that kept a bodyguard tagging at his heels. His disinclination for dueling was on a plane with his dislike for exploring.

Personally, I was rather glad that he was willing to leave the rough stuff to me while he took his ease in big city hotels. Also I was determined that there would be no "kick back" from the book I was writing for him. So I was on the go night and day, making long trips into every section of the country, talking to people, trying to understand them, reading voluminously for facts and statistics, and seeking those experiences that put punch into a travel book.

Of course all this time I was under cover. My employer had letters of introduction to people in high circles, posed in the spotlight, and was plentifully interviewed by the newspapers. He was having the time of his life and riding to a fall at the same time.

He had talked so much about his book and what it would contain, all the while sticking to a couple of big cities never out of the public eye, that the newspapers began slyly to ask when and where he intended to get the data for his book. They pointed out that cities never truly represent the whole life of a country, that to see and understand a pioneer country one must go out "back of beyond" amid primitive conditions. He had no intention of doing that himself. I was doing it for him, and so long as I was writing the book he didn't see why he should put himself out any.

So he disappeared, registered incognito at an obscure hotel where the service wasn't too bad, and loafed there while I took many trips and gathered material. When I was ready to move on he reappeared in public, told the reporters he had been seeing their wonderful country first hand, and was enthusiastic about it.

"You fellows would have had a brass band accompanying me if I had let you know my plans", he said. "How could I have seen your people as they really are if there was a lot of fuss and feathers being made about me wherever I went? You can't get to know them when they've got their company manners on."

It made a tremendous hit with them, but he laid it on so thick that it proved a boomerang. It resulted in his taking perforce a trip into the interior and across a trackless wilderness that was about the limit in discomforts. It was the only way to see an important phase of the country, and I was delighted with the thorough manner in which even the government was enlisted to make it possible for us to see it. But not so the old man. His half formed idea of quitting the train at the first convenient stop and returning to his incognito went glimmering when he learned that it had been arranged to have special representatives meet us everywhere. He went through with it but it finished him.

"I've got enough", he told me when we got back to civilization. "I'm going home. You stay here as long as you want and mop up. If I stick around any longer they'll make me go and see some more of their damned country and I'm fed up. Is there any part of the book you'd like to have me write?"

"Yes," said I, "the political angle. You've been in a position to meet officials and others and get their views and ideas. It will cut my stay here some if I don't have to go after that end of it."

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"I'll do it", he promised. "Just dismiss it from your mind."

I think he really meant to try at the time. But when I had completed all the other chapters, chance for another stunt lured me and I decided not to return home at once. Just to play safe I wrote a chapter on politics and mailed it with the rest of the stuff. I noticed that all the book had to say on politics was what I wrote.

I really must give credit to the old man for a part of the book. Most of the jokes in it are his. Jokes are his forte. He can memorize one and tell it in most enjoyable manner. His other books were spiced with jokes and he insisted upon jokes going into the one I was writing.

"Folks who know me won't believe I wrote the book unless there's a joke every chapter or so", he said. "You've heard me tell a great many, haven't you? Every time some point you're making recalls one of my jokes slap it in."

For some points I made jokes of my own. That's how it happens the book even hints that I went with him on the trip. Somebody had to be the butt of a joke conceived out of whole cloth to drive home a point, and I sacrificed myself. The book says it happened to his secretary, but not even in the preface does he mention my name as he did those of my predecessors in other books. For that there is a reason. A literary critic who read the manuscript and found therein my name advised him to leave it out altogether.

"That chap is writing under his own name a great deal", he said. "He has individual style and if you let it be known he was with you it won't be hard for a lot of people to put two and two together and guess that he wrote this book, not you."

I have no complaint to make. I was paid, and paid well, for what I did; and the trip gave me splendid settings for my own writings. I never could have taken it at my own expense or had the experiences upon which I am building my own reputation for writing. I've written other manuscripts to which other men have signed their names. I've been a hack writer but it's been the means to an end — the writing of books of my own some day.

But I do feel that the old man went rather far when he sent me a copy of the finished book. He inscribed it "with the compliments of the author" and signed his own name with a flourish!

PLAINT

By Madeline Mason-Manheim

I STOOD long at your door, unheeded.
How could you see me—
A mist and a shadow?

I sang long at your threshold, unanswered.
How could you hear me—
A silent whisper?

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THE LONDONER

Pirandello — English and American Translations — A Johnson Exhibition — Oliver Onions — A. C. Benson — Motion Picture Technique — An Author's Claim.

LONDON, *August* 1, 1925.

THE visit of Pirandello to this city has been one of the features of the past few weeks. None of Pirandello's plays has ever been put on here for a run, and indeed his most popular play is not allowed to be performed in the English language (its performance in Italian has been allowed); but the short season of his plays at the New Oxford Theatre has had great press attention. I am told that the stocks of the plays of Pirandello in the booksellers' shops have been exhausted. I meet men who tell me that Pirandello is probably the superior of Shaw. And in spite of this, the amount of actual knowledge of Pirandello and his work is extraordinarily small. We know him here only in American translation, and the editions of his plays at present to be obtained are all American sheets. I do not know what the proportion is of those English people who understand Italian, but it is small; and certainly that proportion is much smaller if one restricts the number of students to those who can understand Italian when spoken in the theatre. And in spite of all, Pirandello has been a success, and there is little doubt that for the future he will hold a place among all those earnest folk who produce plays privately, for the benefit of "the happy few". Pressure will no doubt be brought to bear upon the Censor, in order that the general English public may be allowed to see a play which has been running for months in New York; and in a few years' time Pirandello will most likely be *vieux jeu*. The way of the world in the theatre is past comprehension. So is that kind of snobbery (for as far as I can see it is nothing else) which allows something which must not be performed in English to appear quite frankly in Italian. It is in line with the attitude which allows indecencies to be printed in Latin or Greek, but will not allow them to be translated into English. I do not know whether the ignorant are to be most snubbed or protected; or whether the person who has had a classical education or an education in foreign languages is supposed to be immune from all infection by indecency. At any rate, the British Censorship has once again preserved the chastity of the English-speaking people (in these islands), but has trusted the more learned to say nothing of the horrors which they alone can witness without harm attending.

* * * *

A strange situation has arisen over the Pirandello translations. These were made in America, and they contain phraseology which is peculiarly American. As a consequence they have been generally condemned in the English press as being translations from one foreign tongue into another (see H. L. Mencken's book on "The American Language", *passim*, for justification of this attitude on the part of English reviewers). This attitude has nothing to do with the imaginary

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hostility of English reviewers to American books to which my friend, Mr. John Gunther, recently devoted an article in "The Saturday Review". The attitude of most English reviewers to American books is a good deal more polite than the attitude of those same reviewers towards English books. Mr. Gunther has been misled about this matter, and his figures as to the number of American books published in England are also not to be relied upon. But it is true that American diction does interfere with the enjoyment of English readers who wish to make acquaintance with an Italian classic. I have not the Pirandello translation at hand, but it will be understood that when an English reader is used to calling comfits "sweets" and finds them called "candies", he feels he is not getting the English equivalent of the Italian author's word. It is a small matter, and the difference in phrase does not seem to affect those who go to the theatre and see American plays, or who go to the picture houses and see American films; but there is probably a subtle difference in the case of translations. In these, amid, say, Italian scenes, it is certainly odd to encounter a strange idiom or a strange style of nomenclature superimposed upon the already remarkable strangeness of the original. In the same way, I think English translations frequently offend American readers. The argument is quite as true from the American standpoint as it is from the English. The reproduction of, let us say, Italian colloquialism by its English or American equivalent can never be wholly satisfactory to those who are familiar with another idiom. Similarly, where — as in the case of a translation of Molière which was once published here, in which French dialect was reproduced as a sort of pidgeon Lancashire dialect — the effort is made to substitute one peculiar form of speech for another, the effect is an exasperation. In the case of Pirandello, I really believe that there was something more than the traditional "superciliousness" of the English critics behind the comments. It seems to me to be a pity that the habit should have grown up among continental authors of selling "world rights in the English language". If the English translation does not satisfy the Americans, and the American translation does not please the English, it would surely be far better that there should be two translations. In any case I feel that the ruffled feelings of translators who have tried to make an author intelligible to their own countrymen, without thought of the citizens of another country, would be smoothed and spared by this arrangement. I am emboldened to make these remarks because I know that the English comments upon the Pirandello translations have offended some Americans, and because I also know that Mr. Scott Moncrieff's translations of Proust have been attacked by American critics with vigor quite comparable.

* * * *

Upon this day there has been opened in London an exhibition of books and manuscripts by and relating to Samuel Johnson. It is of the greatest interest. My own visit to the exhibition was marred (so far as I was concerned) by the presence of a fussy pedant who shouted at the top of his squeaky voice and was much more occupied with his own importance than with the books and the manuscripts of Johnson. He announced (I did not know him, and did not wish to know him) that he also had a Johnsonian collection, apparently uncalled upon by Mr. Humphrey Milford, and was determined that nobody

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but himself should appreciate what he had come to see. As a result, my impressions of the exhibition, I find, are something less distinct than I should have wished them to be. For the most part the exhibits are printed books from the libraries of Mr. R. W. Chapman, Mr. C. K. Shorter, and Mr. T. J. Wise; but one very interesting item, which the accompanying note said had been called the rarest book in existence, belonged to Mr. Augustine Birrell. This was Boswell's "Ode to Tragedy", which I do not remember ever to have read. There is the celebrated "Plan of a Dictionary of the English Language", which looks a most noble affair. In comparison, the announcement of Johnson's Shakespeare is, typographically, small beer. The original editions of the famous Odes and "Rasselas", and a second edition of the "Life of Savage" are noteworthy, and the "Lives of the Poets" in various editions figure largely. Especially interesting are some of the smaller books about Johnson which were published after his death. Some letters and some receipts diversify the whole, and in one corner of a showcase may be seen a treasure which Mr. Milford rightly says needs no apology. This is nothing less than a Jane Austen *cache* — a letter and a pendant which is claimed as the original of the pendant which stirred so much trouble in "Mansfield Park". These two items make a charming *bonne bouche* for all but the pedantic Johnsonian. Talking of Johnsonians reminds me that some years ago, being called upon unexpectedly to speak at a dinner in celebration of Johnson's birthday (the dinner was held at Lichfield, and is so held annually), I stammered out that I was probably the only person in the room who had really read the complete works of Johnson. I was not contradicted. Mark, I was not contradicted. Let us hope that my claim was passed over in contemptuous silence by the remaining speakers. But even if the statement contained no effective innuendo against those present upon that occasion to do Johnson honor, it remains probable that this Johnson exhibition will be principally patronized, not by Johnsonians, if the truth were known, but by Boswellians. For this reason I venture to commend it to both Johnsonians and Boswellians. May I add, also, for the sake of this one little corner of delight, lovers of Jane Austen? The exhibition is being held at the Oxford University Press offices in Warwick Square.

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Speaking offhand, and without reference to any catalogues, I should say that it was in 1912 that the world saw one of the most remarkable short works of fiction of this or any other time. I refer to Mr. Oliver Onions's book, "In Accordance with the Evidence". My first introduction to the book came from a novelist of considerable gifts, who said that it was exactly ten thousand words too long. When I came to read "In Accordance with the Evidence" for myself, I thought it was exactly the right length. Mr. Onions wrote a sequel to "In Accordance with the Evidence" soon afterwards, and this was very nearly as good as its precursor. The quality of surprise was less evident, however, and I think I cared for this second volume rather less than I had done for the first. Nor had Mr. Onions yet done with his theme, for he rounded off the tale with a third volume, "The Story of Louie". We thus had more or less the same circumstances given from several angles respectively, in "In Accordance with the Evidence", 'The Debit Account", and "The Story of Louie". All to-

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gether, I think the three books made one of the most striking novels of the modern schools; and I have always been surprised to find how few readers were aware of the excellence of Mr. Onions's best work. "In Accordance with the Evidence" I really believe to have been something more than a *tour de force*. It was certainly that, and with a more effective title would have had a better chance of giving Mr. Onions world wide fame than any other book he has written, excepting only "Widdershins", a volume of unusual short stories. I have not always cared for Mr. Onions's work, although I have read more of it than I have done of most modern novelists. There is often a hardness and a bitterness about it which is the mark of something less than the highest class fiction. "Little Devil Doubt", for example, although it was pretty accurate as a picture of the Harmsworth *régime* and kindred matters, was a disappointment because it was unlighted by a sense of the ridiculousness of the whole. It was savage, and it was scathing, but it was not humorous. It should have been humorous. Humor is not Mr. Onions's strong suit. But grimness and truthfulness are, and it was for these qualities that "In Accordance with the Evidence" was chiefly distinguished. For a long time — even in a cheap edition which was published as a volume of a long series — the book has been out of print. I had begun to fear that it would remain half forgotten, except by those who appreciate good novels even if they are not fashionable, until some person of enterprise boomed it into a reprint and took all the credit, long after Mr. Onions had departed this life. I am pleased to learn that my fears in this direction were groundless. The author has recently taken up the series of novels which he built around the single theme, and he has adroitly dovetailed them. The books will no longer be known as "In Accordance with the Evidence", "The Debit Account", and "The Story of Louie", but will shortly blossom out into a new and very long work called "Whom God Hath Sundered". I await this book with impatience, and shall read it again with avidity. I shall also expect to see it reviewed in many places as an entirely new novel. That it will immediately be reviewed as a masterpiece I cannot expect; but that it will eventually be recognized as an outstanding piece of fiction by a writer of quite exceptional power, I have no doubt whatever. In addition to "Whom God Hath Sundered", Mr. Onions will be represented in the autumn publishing lists by a reprint of "Widdershins", so that if he is ever during his lifetime to reap the benefit of his talent, 1925 should be a red letter year. So far as I know I have never met Mr. Onions, who is a writer who does not greatly enjoy (any more than I do myself) the society of other authors in mass; but from those who do know him I have at various times had descriptions which have not surprised me. He is a very quiet, hard-felt-hatted man with a practical manner. He was at one time an artist, and was upon the permanent art staff of the Harmsworth organization. He has written about twenty-five works of fiction, in which for the most part the portions giving scope for hard realism are the best. Owing to his limitations of humor, he has tended to be satirical, and his satirical work I should place very much lower than his best. At his best he is very good indeed — much better than many who are more widely celebrated. For this reason I am delighted that some of his finest work is now to be made newly available for discussion and a wider public.

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The late A. C. Benson (whose brother is writing in one of the periodicals — I think "The London Mercury" — some damaging articles about Robert Louis Stevenson, saying much of what has been said before upon the same theme) was once regarded as a considerable writer. I do not think the period of this esteem was a very lasting one, and indeed I never cared at all for his sad and rather puling talent. For me, as no doubt for others, the last word was said by Mr. Max Beerbohm in the diabolical parody of Benson's style which appears in "A Christmas Garland". But this parody, although it is devastating, is at the same time merciful, in that it does not contain, as it well might do, some rebuke (implied) of Benson's "fine" writing. I recall in particular some terrible writing of the most sentimental description which occurred in the memoir of the author's brother, Robert Hugh Benson. The whole of "Hugh" was singular, for the reason that there can have been extraordinarily little sympathy between the two brothers. The lack of sympathy is cloaked in the memoir, which is a gem of humorlessness. The literary insincerity of its passages relating to the death of Robert Hugh, and the grief indicated by both sides of the road along which the author walked to his brother's funeral, is astonishing. The same fault is to be remarked in the study of Edward FitzGerald which A. C. Benson contributed to the English "Men of Letters" series. Listen to this, for example:

> Omar does not go to the wine jar only that he may forget, but that he may also remember. He feeds on honey-dew and drinks the milk of paradise that he may banish for a little the terror of the unknown, the bewildered mystery of life, the pain, the shame, the fear, and the dark shadow that nearer or further lies across the road; thus much to forget; and then he is, perchance, enabled to remember the sweet days, the spring and the budding rose; to remember that though the beginning and the end are dark, yet that the God of Pain and Death is also the maker of the fair world, the gracious charm of voice and hand and eye, the woven tapestry of tree and meadow-grass, the sunset burning red behind the dark tree-trunks of the grove, the voice of music, the song of the bird, the whisper of leaves, the murmur of the hidden stream — of all the sights and sounds that fill the heart full and leave it yearning, unsatisfied with the pain which is itself a joy.
>
> And, then, in such a mood the shadow of loss, the memory of sweet things that have an end, the sleep of death, tremble into music too; and are like the deep, slow pedal-notes above which the lighter descant wings its way, as a bird that flies dipping its feet in the slow-stirring wave.

And so on. Is it not apparent that Omar Khayyám has lost something of quality by his translation into the prose of the author of "The House of Quiet" and kindred devotional works? It seems to me that there is much in this passage of what the late Barrett Wendell called Mr. Benson's "fastidious virginity". Having read Benson's first novel, "Arthur Hamilton" (1886), Wendell wrote to a common friend that "from this book I cannot convince myself that he (A. C. Benson) has in him the making of a creative writer; interesting as it is, it is a book of but one character, and wanting in power. And in certain details, which catch my professional eye, the style is wretchedly careless . . . He alludes somewhere to the 'gift of expression', or of style, or some such thing. He does not appreciate, I think, the fineness, the delicacy of the technical art of writing, which is no more a gift than that of painting or of counterpoint."* This seems to me to be good criticism and what one would expect from a person so sagacious as Wendell. It would have applied to any book by A. C. Benson. The truth was, so far as I can

*"Barrett Wendell and His Letters", by M. A. De Wolfe Howe.

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see, that Benson had no natural taste for the use of language, and his attempts to force the note, to express that after which his emotions strained, invariably led him into bad writing. The carelessness we may see in the inequality of his pages, but in fact the carelessness was more in the line of tastelessness than in that of thoughtless ease of composition.

More bad writing is committed by those who do not know what they want to say than by those who do not know how to express urgent thoughts. With the latter, the words are most often at hand — sometimes, it may be, uncouth or strangled, but with the vigor of original feeling behind them. With the former, where thought follows the words that straggle off the end of the pen, the worst sin is that of fluency.

Fluency Benson appeared to have, but as in the passage I have quoted, there is the false feeling which so often goes with the phrase "inexpressible beauty". All the time, he seemed to be trying to feel the beauty which instinct told him was appropriate at this moment. The realization of the beauty was elsewhere. That is what we call sentimentality, or false emotion. It is the effort to move others by something which has not really moved ourselves. It is the literary trick. In those of us who do not write, sentimentality is merely the attempt to tiptoe to something that we feel we ought to feel upon any serious occasion. Hence the discomforts we experience in reading A. C. Benson when he is portraying really deep things. He had a pedestrian talent, and was no doubt a worthy man and a sincere friend; but when he began to write he had such yearning after the mystical touch that he became boring and ridiculous.

I cannot forbear quoting here, in case the phrase has not been noticed by others, the remark of a film producer who has been seeing Sir James Barrie with reference to the film version of, I think, "A Kiss for Cinderella". This gentleman announced that Barrie "has an uncanny understanding of motion picture technique". Would not one have expected the gift? Has not Barrie always had "an uncanny understanding" of every technique? The point was made recently in one of that series of personal portraits which Mr. A. G. Gardiner is contributing at the present time to "The Daily News". It was originally made by R. L. Stevenson, who said that Barrie "had a journalist at his elbow". I know that most authors have some old phrase about themselves which haunts them because it has taken the fancy of all who have seen it, but the reference to Barrie in one of Stevenson's letters is one of the best of that admirable epistolary critic's verdicts. Sir James has always been a master of the technique of journalism, of novel writing, of play writing, and now of speech-making. It is not at all to be wondered at that he has seen the ways of the film world with his customary shrewdness. I myself, on a recent occasion, when three people were trying to tell me the story of a film they had seen, and had reached the point at which the heroine was turned out of doors by her husband, stopped the narration to ask, "Was it snowing?", and after this (for of course it was) I expect to have my understanding of film technique described by some simple minded film agent as "uncanny". The truth is, there is nothing so easy to acquire as "an uncanny understanding of motion picture technique". All one has to do is to choose the crudest stunt with which visits to a picture house have made one familiar,

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and one will at once be of the elect. I should much like to know how Sir James illustrated his "uncanny understanding". If it was by anything more than the simple reaction of his mind to an obvious problem of effect, I should be greatly surprised.

* * * *

I have just become aware of the ideal life for an author. I used to think that this was the writing of a play which was never produced, but upon which successive managers secured the option of production. (I know of one man who once wrote a farce which has brought him in a steady income from options for the last twenty years although he has never had anything else accepted for production and although the play itself has never been produced.) But I was wrong. A young dramatic journalist has just sued a firm of publishers, and has obtained judgment owing to the non-appearance of the delinquent firm, for £95 and cost, being the amount which the publishers had agreed to pay him for a volume (presumably a collection of the dramatic criticisms which he had contributed to a weekly journal) to be called "The Year in the Theatre, 1924". I may do the author an injustice, and the book may have contained all new material, but I feel that he is well off to get the amount which he had been promised by the publishers for a book of which he has not had to correct the proofs and for which he had not to submit to the comments of his brother critics. If I could get paid for a book that was not published, I should rejoice, for publication is the thing that really irks me most of all. On the other hand, it is probable that any author would be annoyed at the failure of his publisher to produce a book which he had supplied, and I think the author in this case had a real grievance. As the publishers did not appear, we shall never know their reason for not publishing the book, but one thing is certain — their failure to publish is not likely to have been dissatisfaction with the book. If it had been, the matter could quite well have been settled out of court. Indeed, I must revise my feeling in the matter. It seems to me to be an unfair performance, to waste a man's time, and then to leave him to right himself by means of the law. The book will now be out of date. Therefore a wrong has been committed. All the same, if one could sell the book over and over again, what a life that would be for an author indisposed for work!

SIMON PURE

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SOME ADVENTURES OF AN ILLUSTRATOR

By Joseph Pennell

With Illustrations by the Author

Editor's Note: *The publishers of "The Adventures of an Illustrator" have given us permission to reprint portions of Mr. Pennell's autobiographical narrative. This famous illustrator, friend and biographer of Whistler, gives many revelatory and entertaining glimpses of figures of his youth and of the present as well.*

WHEN I had finished my drawings for Howells's "Tuscan Cities", it was arranged that I should illustrate some Italian articles written by Vernon Lee, to whom Howells introduced me. In her amazing house I met everyone — Russians, artists, authors, diplomats, and Mary Robinson — all names and nothing more to me. One more blankly ignorant of all that life never existed. But Florence was a somewhat strange place — expatriated Scotch-English Americans — some there to save, some because they liked it, some because they had to. What don't I remember? The good dinners of the banker who had a difference with his depositors and so found himself in Florence loafing instead of working at his bank; Ouida and her dogs; Livingstone, who could drive eight horses tandem round two corners without the police stopping him or his seeing where he was going, or what was coming; the pretty English girl who used to give *soldi* to the counts, when they left the front door of the club and followed her, and she called each one *poverino;* and the family where, when you went to call, you heard a shriek and the hostess said, "It's only Mama"; and then a chorus, "That's Papa home from the club"; and then a yell, "I'm dying!", and a person in a sort of coffin was wheeled in. Then they used to wheel him out and shoot him into a carriage, coffin and all — for the back opened — and then he was raised up, till one day, when he yelled he was dying and no one heard him, he got so mad he forgot he was paralyzed and he jumped out of his coffin and spent the rest of his life riding on buses and writing poetry. And the adventures of the tourists in Italian — those who were sure they could talk it — when overcharged; the one from Kalamazoo who remarked to the cabman, "*Si voi credevi qui voi putavi s'accommoda sopra una citadina Americana voi s'baglato.*" And the other who had only one horse for a drive and was charged for two courses, *due horse* being the purest Florentine for *course* — she had stopped on the way. And in the early morning I would be waked by the Bersaglieri, their cock feathers waving, headed by their buglers, trotting back to their barracks from their drill; and in the late evening the men who hummed like a great mandolin, while one sang as they walked the moonlit streets, lulled me to sleep.

It was arranged finally that Vernon Lee, Evelyn Pickering — she later married William De Morgan —, and Mary Robinson, who married Darmesteter — and then Duclaux —, should go to Urbino to do an article on Raph-

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ael — it was to appear in connection with some Raphael celebration — and that I should be their chaperon or knight or encumbrance. One May morning we left Florence, second class, and wound up the Val d'Arno by Arezzo and Trasimeno to Perugia. Then no trolley or motor bus carried you to the swell hotel; I don't think the hotel existed. We stopped at a little inn, the Belle Arti, in a dark piazza, in the centre of the city, for the ladies said they loved the life. Never shall I forget the first sight of the great plain from the great piazza, by the great gate of the city, faraway Assisi, where we would next stop, glowing in the sunset light high on its hillside. But as we looked, Miss Pickering fell ill, and she was sent back to Florence alone. That evening we three went on a search for the Baglioni, then and now only a name to me, up to the great piazza, where the Pope still blesses everyone who passes, then down through the dark, vaulted streets till we came to the blank, black wall of the Baglioni Palace. And as we stood there silent, from the mystery round us came an echo of the fight of long ago. Again and again with E.* and Helen and alone I have stood before that grim wall in the darkness, but never since has it given back the sound of battle, the wails of the wounded, the voices of the victors. It was only a murmur but it was real. Frightened, without words, we came out of the blackness. But we had heard.

Next morning we made our plans to start. We hired a carriage with three horses, fine in feathers, and tinkling with bells. The day was spent, after this, in galleries and churches. To me, then as now, the charm was in the city and its character, yet Vernon Lee said, and that was the end of it, "All Italian hill towns are alike and all uninteresting save for their history." That is the author's point of view. We did the Pinturicchios in the Museum in the piazza, and the Raphaels in the convent outside the walls. In the evening we went again to the Baglioni Palace, but there was not a sound. Next morning we started for Assisi, down the long hill, across the plain by the Etruscan tombs, the Roman remains, to Santa Maria degli Angeli, and then up and up the mountain side to the home of the blessed Francis, Assisi mounting ever above us. At last we came to the gate of the city. No touts acclaimed us for their hotel. We rattled and jingled to the one *albergo*, and there we were only guests, the whole town showing the way. The legend of the Blessed Francis was not yet known abroad and had not brought riches to Assisi. We dined on the terrace beside the Church, as the long lines of light stretched across the plain, touching the Temple in the Valley of the Clitumnus with gold, turning the Tiber to silver, and washing the mountains with blue shadows. And when, in the twilight, we asked the waiter about a map and our road, he confessed that he did not even know the way out of the town, any more than our driver, and explained it by saying that he was "a little bad in his eyes". Next morning we saw the chapels in the Lower Church, and that blue heaven with its gold stars is still before me — outside was only a sad city of ruin and poverty. But the driver had found our road. We started and we wound and wound ever up to Gubbio, and down again across a valley, and then came a climb. Two oxen were added and we mostly walked, and up and up we went till at last the high pass opened, and away above was Urbino, beyond another vine-filled valley, the city stretch-

*Elizabeth Robins (Mrs. Pennell).

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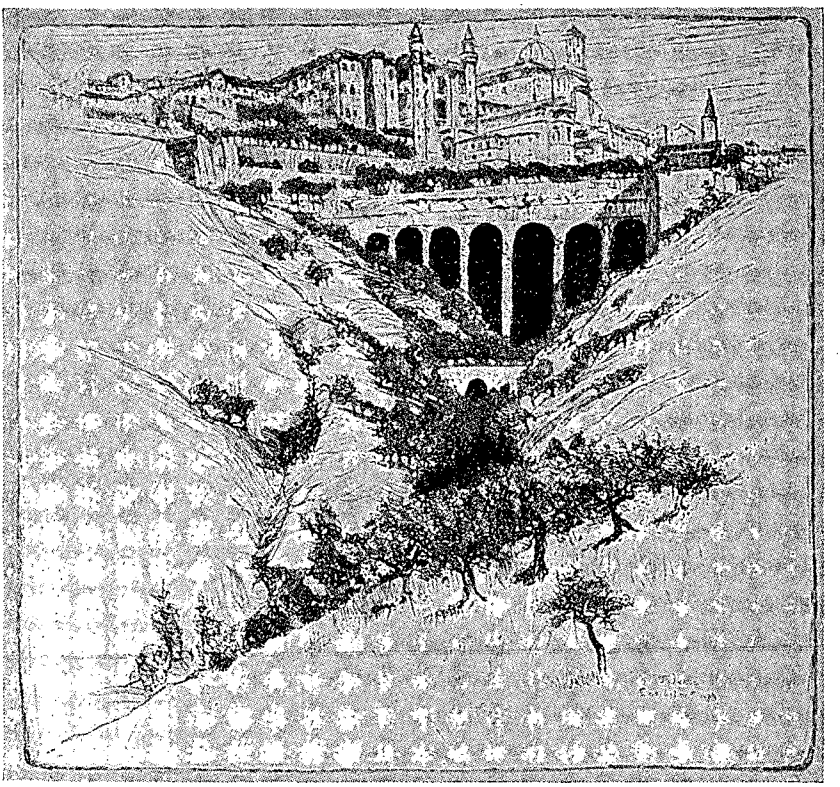

Ducal Urbino standing on its great foundations. From etching made in 1883.

ing from mountain to mountain, built on mighty arches. Our coming was known before we reached it, and a crowd awaited the Milors, and rooms and a dinner with little birds were ready. In the morning, the ladies looked up Raphael and I made an etching of the city from the valley. I have no idea what Raphael had to do with it, save that he was born there. I think I drew the house. But I do know that I have never seen such a bridge as that on which Urbino stands. At that date, though there were no new artists, in one way I was one, for I never went to see an old picture if I could make a new one; but I was a young fool.

Here our triumphal progress ended. First of all there were complications with the drivers of the carriage and the oxen, which I, owing to their knowledge of the language, left to the ladies. But when we started, the landlord, thinking we were successors of Ruskin and "*Milors Inglesi*", asked the price of his hotel for keeping us in it, the ladies collapsed, and I settled matters by handing him a proper sum and saying "*Questo o nienti.*" I found then that sufficient ignorance of a language is a great advantage — in certain cases. Humbly, alone, without a crowd, we carried our things to the diligence and meekly took our places among the peasants and drummers who filled it. I was on top. Down we started, San Marino on its mountain to the left; below the great plain with Rimini in it

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and the sea beyond. In a little while, through the streets of Rimini, we clattered to another dark, dreary palace turned hotel, upstairs, as most hotels then were. The ladies fell upon Malatesta and I fell to drawing, as I have tried again and again, to do the Roman bridges; but I have never forgotten the majesty of the chapels or the sadness of the grass-grown, silent, empty, palace-lined streets. We discovered, too, that our money had nearly run out. The ladies wanted to see the mosaics at Ravenna, then unrestored, and the Pinetta, then unburned, but there was not enough cash to take us all. So we drew lots — or they did — and the result was that I was sent straight back to Florence, third class, without a *centessimo* in my pocket to stop in Bologna, or even to buy anything to eat or drink on the way, while they, having won my money, wrote me that they reveled in Ravenna. However, I had my revenge, for I ate a good dinner in Florence and when, after a week, they came back and I called, I was told that they were always in bed. They got out eventually, and so did the articles, and the curious may find them, Urbino in "The Magazine of Art" and Rimini in "The English Illustrated". But though we all live, the magazines are no more.

Later in the spring I made a second little journey, this time alone, and this time again to illustrate an article written by Vernon Lee. I hired a carriage in Lucca — I could get no bicycle — and after a detour to see the Devil's Bridge, reached the Bagni in the evening and stopped in a little hotel by the river. Outside the nightingales sang, and when they stopped, the river rippled on till morning. At sunrise, I started to walk to Barga and the towns round about. It was Corpus Christi, though I did not know it; the article by Vernon Lee had nothing to do with the *festa*. The road, which I have cycled and motored since over and over, moved up among the dark shadows of the chestnuts and then came out into the open country. Tired of tramping it, I climbed up to the first hill town I saw, wonderful from below with its *campanile*. Within its narrow streets all was dismal, all was poverty and squalor; though not the filth the Italian makes when he gets to America. But in America he becomes a different sort of Italian, and he no longer comes from Barga. It was a largish place and as it was a *festa*, everyone was about. There was no inn, only the house with the bush above the door. There was wine, no Chianti, though this is almost its country. There was no meat, though many goats; no eggs, though plenty of chickens; nothing but stale black bread, ancient cheese and sour wine. But after a five mile walk at sunrise and no breakfast, anything is good.

What do these people eat, or do they, as I have been told, learn to live without eating? So we shall have to live, because it costs too much to dine, and under prohibition we can't dine decently. But most new Americans have never dined or done anything decently. These hill people were grim and silent. The inn reminded me of the English country "pubs", the most miserable in the world, till now that America has gone dry, with only cereals, cold storage, chewing gum and candy to live on, the new American "eats" — the new American word. I got away as soon as possible. The people were honestly poor, for they scarcely charged me anything, and offered last year's chestnuts and showed me a cut across the high hills to the main road to Barga; and some went with me, till I could see the highway glittering in the light below.

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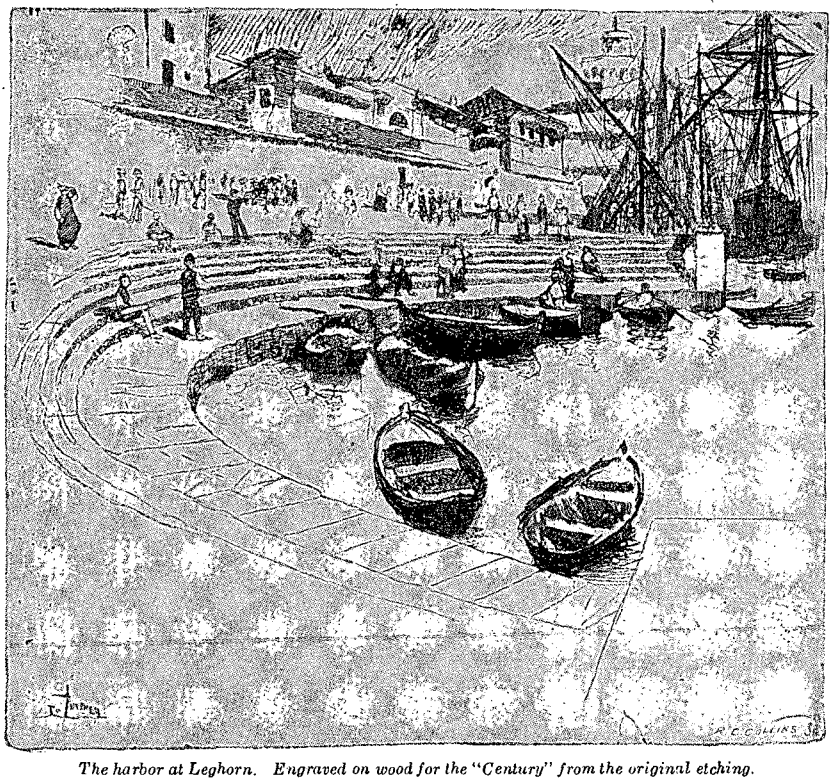

The harbor at Leghorn. Engraved on wood for the "Century" from the original etching.

As far as I could make out, all the talk was of America, and that they wanted to go there; but we had no prohibition then, though I hear the Italians have all the wine they want in this dry desert today.

Once back on the high road, I found it filled with the gayest, brightest crowd; and, at last, we wound up into the town of Barga, crowded with people. Mass had begun in the cathedral at the top of the great flight of steps, and before long a procession came out of the church to the peals of the bells and music of the band. First came small girls, carrying great baskets of roses, and as they walked they strewed the streets deep with them, and from the crowded windows and balconies above, draped with hangings, more roses were showered down. Then came the city authorities — the Mayor gorgeous in sash and top hat, then priests, acolytes, and last the Bishop, carrying under a canopy the Host, and finally all the confraternities of the country round, moving over the bed of roses. As the Mayor went by, he eyed me closely. I supposed I had done something, though I knelt with the rest as the Holy Thing passed. While the procession wound round the town, I waited on the great terrace strewn with roses, in the glittering air. As I rested, every little while crashes of bells surged from the tower of the cathedral and when they ceased, one after the other, all round the valley and up the encircling church-crowned hills, the pealing jangling was taken up by church after church, dying away in

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the far distance, then coming back nearer and nearer, till the cathedral bells alone crashed out again. Soon the procession returned, for the route was short, and soon the Mass was over. Then straight to me came the Mayor. "You 'Merican, you?" "Yes." "You know Five Pointa, New Yorka?" "Yes." "Yes? — Me I sell him Cristofo Colombo; me — rich man me. Come dinner, you?" I came.

Under his own vine and fig tree, on that perfect day, by the side of the church, we dined, looking down on his vineyard bought with Cristofo Colombos, and surrounded by the Common Council of the town, the ecclesiastical dignitaries and distinguished guests from all about. And Cristofo Colombo, the hero and cause of it all, was not there. Everyone, save the priests — and some of them, too — knew New York, Boston, New Orleans, and San Francisco better than I — had tramped our land, each with his tray of plaster casts, and had sold them; and each one, when he had saved enough, came back and bought his little farm or vineyard and was going to live happily ever afterward. For I then learned that all the sellers of plaster casts come from about Barga. At first they did not quite trust me, for my local knowledge of Italian quarters in big cities in America and Europe was vague, but they had another test: "'Merican soldier here — want talk you." A long haired, white bearded prophet sat at the table and I was solemnly introduced. His Italian even was not very fluent, only a few words, and he was deaf; but gradually his American all came back: "Me — *interpretario*, was in war." "What war?" "'Merican War." "What American war, the Revolution?" "Yes; me know Winfield Scott, General United States Grant, General Sherman, Santa Anna — me *interpretario* for General Scott and Santa Anna, Mexico." And here was a veteran of the Mexican War, without a pension, and not asking for a bonus; but evidently he had made something out of it, for he was one of the magnates of the town, and he went up still higher in official esteem when his American came gradually back to him. I was able, through the Mayor, to assure the company that his story, which they had apparently doubted, was straight; anyway he knew more of the Mexican War than I had ever heard. And then we dined in the shady pergola.

That was the first real Italian dinner I had ever had — *vermuth* and *sasticcio* and *capretto arrosto con piselli* and *finochio* and *dolci* of *zabaione* and *sempre chianti*. But why tell of it to a nation, a hundred millions of whom never had a decent dinner in their lives, and have destroyed by cold storage and prohibition what they had, and can't stand anyone else living decently, and who, like the Senator from Georgia, "thank Gaud, we don't eat like Yu-rope-ens." The dinner lasted till Vespers and then there was *vino santo* and cognac and *strega* and *sigarre Toscane*, and we sat on until dark, and the Angelus rang down from the cathedral and was taken up by one church after another low in the valleys, growing fainter, then farther away by those high in the hills, till it died in the distance toward Volterra, black on the furthest mountain; then it came back, and a last loud burst from the cathedral bells closed the day. If there is anything anywhere more beautiful in this world than the Angelus on Corpus Christi at Barga, I do not know it, and of beauty I know much — and have seen much. Then I had a little supper at the quiet but rather tired out inn, and in the morning went to work, or tried to, for it was not easy to escape from the patrons of Cristofo

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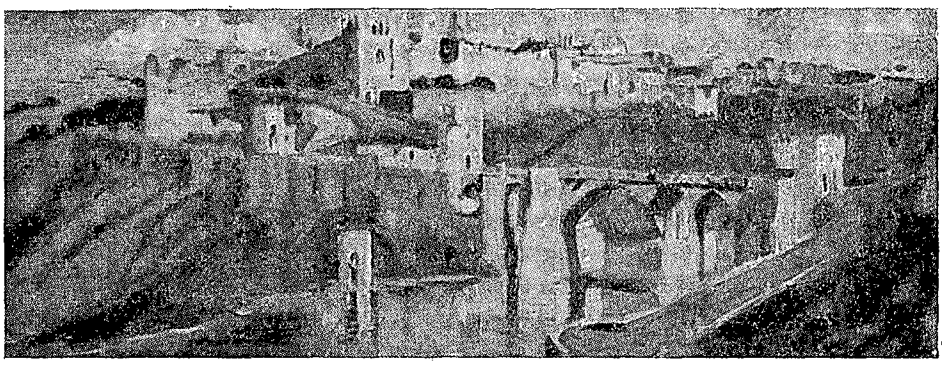

Colombo; and to tell the truth, there was rather a similarity in their stories, and they apparently had no adventures, and they had all prospered, and here they were, and they had little Cristofos — and — *ecco!* It was so genuine and they were so delighted with their success over there, but I had to work — at intervals. Luckily, there was a *festa* or market in a day or so, somewhere else, and by the time they came back, I had finished and walked down to the Bagni di Lucca.

These people had made their world, they thought, safe for themselves, and now some are killed and some ruined by land and sea grabbers, D'Annunzio and his heroes, who dragged Italy into the war. Italy is finished, killed by the fools who made the war. Those I saw in Barga, thank God, mostly died before, and so escaped the ruin of the world — the wreck that has caught us all who are still alive. Even Mussolini cannot bring that world back.

THE MULATTO

By Claude McKay

BECAUSE I am the white man's son — his own,
Bearing his bastard birth-mark on my face,
I will dispute his title to his throne,
Forever fight him for my rightful place.
There is a searing hate within my soul,
A hate that only kin can feel for kin,
A hate that makes me vigorous and whole,
And spurs me on unceasingly to win.
Because I am my cruel father's child,
My love of justice stirs me up to hate,
A warring Ishmaelite, unreconciled,
When falls the hour I shall not hesitate,
Into my father's heart to plunge the knife
To gain the utmost freedom that is life.

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THE NEW YORKER

The Musical Revue Puts to Rout the Sentimental Comic Opera—An Excellent Performance of a Delightful Gilbert Burlesque—New York Beats a Path to Grand Street—A New Edition of the Ziegfeld Follies Without Much that is New—Earl Carroll Tries Out a New Idea upon a Self-Conscious American Audience.

OF all the art movements in the contemporary theatre none has come within shooting distance of the musical revue. There are "Follies" and "Scandals" and "Vanities" and "Gaieties" and what not, all adding their electric signs to the general brilliance of Broadway on a hot summer night. Even the musical comedy and the comic opera have become infected to a degree where most of them seem to carry a minimum of story interest and a maximum of vaudeville numbers. Gone are the days of "The Merry Widow", "The Belle of New York" and "The Count Luxembourg". Gone are the glamorous princes and milkmaids! Gone, the seductive, syrupy waltzes. Jazz and "nut" comedians and Charleston steppers have taken their place. From end to end of Broadway there are probably only two musical shows in the grand tradition — "The Love Song" and "The Student Prince" — both staged by the shrewd Shuberts to fill the vast spaces of the Century and the Al Jolson Theatres. And the strange thing is that they have filled the vast spaces for many months past and give every sign of continuing to do so for some months ahead, not to mention the prospects for a never ending tour of the road. It is a fact that leads one to believe in the existence of the old fashioned, sentimental American. All, then, is not jazz and tinsel. But we suspect at the same time that of the audiences which visit "The Student Prince" and "The Love Song" not one in fifty visits the musical revues.

There can be no doubt that the musical revue is the more American of the two brands of entertainment. It lends itself to the pace, the glitter, the confused noisiness which has come, not without reason, to be associated with American life.

Certainly in America it has been developed to a degree of perfection which makes the shabby revues of Paris music halls and the tinselly entertainments of London seem, for the most part, second rate and devitalized. Even when one takes apart and analyzes so excellent an entertainment as the "Charlot Revue", it is clear that its success, viewing it now from a distance, arose from the expertness of two or three entertainers, notably Beatrice Lillie, Gertrude Lawrence and Jack Buchanan. In the few moments when they were not on the stage, it was poor, insipid stuff indeed. There was no great beauty, either in staging or in the chorus, to support the dull moments. We were bedazzled by two or three performers, of whom one at least is without peer. And the "Charlot Revue" was the best thing of its kind ever sent us from abroad and perhaps the best thing that either London or Paris had produced in many a season.

We were led into these remarks by the profusion of revues now blossoming

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on Manhattan Island. Indeed, there is little else, save for the old war-horses like "What Price Glory" and "They Knew What They Wanted", worth seeing. We make one notable exception however in the case of "Engaged" which The Stagers have launched with success after two admirably done plays which were not too well received. "Engaged" is an old piece by W. S. Gilbert, hitherto, we believe, unproduced and now brought from obscurity by Brian Hooker who himself contributed some delightful lyrics. The music is drawn from Sullivan, the author's creative twin, and from Molloy, Roeckel, Pinsuti and other sentimental composers of the Age of Innocence. Porter Steele composed the few extra songs needed to fill in the empty spaces. The fabrication is an excellent job taken from any point of view.

As to the production, casting and staging, it is hard to conceive how it could have been better done. In a preposterous burlesque of the drama of the 'seventies, J. M. Kerrigan is the young man who proposes to right and to left. Antoinette Perry plays the "heavy woman" without whom no Gilbert and Sullivan piece is complete, and plays it with an intelligence and *flair* which surely equal the talent of those first Gilbert and Sullivan performers, now dead or retired, of whom our own generation hears so much. As the ingénue, Rosamond Whiteside kept making us think how good she would be in the title rôle of "Patience" and what an exquisite voice she possesses. We recant now the acid remarks made some time ago regarding coyness; for we have discovered in Miss Whiteside a woman who can be coy and still be charming, arch and still not sickening. Nothing that we have seen this year gave us more pleasure than "Engaged". It was infinitely better than the pretentious revival of "The Mikado" and at moments even better than the excellently done "Patience".

One of the remarkable sights of New York is the mob which, assembling from all parts of town, assails the window of the Neighborhood Playhouse night after night in the heat to beg for tickets. This little theatre, in the most remote and inaccessible part of the city, is certainly like the gentleman who made the better mousetrap; the world beats a path through the hot and overpopulated lower east side to its door. There is reason in the spectacle too, for "The Grand Street Follies" offers a brand of intelligence which is rare indeed along the conveniently located sidewalks of Broadway. It possesses a flavor, an originality, which survives even a lack of the splendor offered by the uptown revues. This year, the entertainment is perhaps a shade less diverting than last, although there are moments — such as the burlesque of "What Price Glory" done in Sunday School phrases, the performance of "Abie's Irish Rose" done as a hack Italian opera of the calibre of "Rigoletto", Albert Carroll's imitation of Lynn Fontanne, and a remarkable dance in a Goya costume, by a girl called Blanche Talmud, which cannot be excelled. And it is impossible to overlook "The Wild Duck" written in the manner of Congreve, which was more in the proper key and acted more skilfully than any of this season's Congreve revivals.

Sadly, with memories of the good old days in our heart, we witnessed the summer edition of the Ziegfeld Follies. In this new edition there was no fire, or earthquake, or divorce scandal which set it apart from any other edition, and there was a great deal of the old stuff left over from last year. It was a

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great deal like the "Extras!" which are always being shouted through the streets: one pays a nickel and finds only two cents' worth. We suspect that Mr. Ziegfeld has grown both bored and parsimonious. We recognized a great many old sets and trappings, not to mention old ideas decorated afresh — such originalities as a song called "I'd Like to be a Gardener in a Garden of Girls" with a general parade of the Glorified American Girls, clad in feathers and tinsel, who stood appropriately on rocks and steps until the whole stage resembled the aviary of the Bronx Zoo. We kept sitting there, a little angry at being given so much of the old stuff, and thinking all the while about the great old days when in one evening at the "Follies" one might have seen Fannie Brice, Will Rogers, Raymond Hitchcock, W. C. Fields, Ray Dooley, Eddie Cantor, Bert Williams, Dolores, Ina Claire and a dozen other good entertainers. This year there were only Ray Dooley and Rogers and Fields left to do all the work, and even these entertainers seen over and over again in the same evening lose some of their charm. It was a good enough revue in its way but when one thought of the good old days it was nothing at all. Still it was the good old days which gave the "Follies" their reputation and it is a big enough reputation no doubt to carry the public through many more new editions of old stuff.

In the "Vanities", Earl Carroll has launched an excellent idea which may fail only through the fault of the American public. He has made a musical revue into a night club. The stage and the auditorium have been brought together and the orchestra has been placed on the side of the theatre. There is a space cleared between the stage and the audience for dancing before the performance and during the intermissions and excellent music is provided. Over all this presides with exactly the proper verve and spontaneity Julius Tannen. But the trouble lies with the self-conscious audience. It is afraid to see itself dancing almost on the stage. It cannot get accustomed to the beautiful girls who act as "hostesses". In short, it squirms and shows every desire to look on, whereas the whole idea is to participate. The revue itself is excellent entertainment and moves rapidly, with excellent music, a multitude of pretty girls and handsome settings. It might also be added that it is a very funny show. But the thing which impressed us most was the amount of money represented. As Mr. Ziegfeld has grown parsimonious, Mr. Carroll has become lavish, extravagantly so. It is the kind of performance popularly associated with the idea of Babylon.

LOUIS BROMFIELD

THE DRAMA SHELF

"Contemporary Plays" selected and edited by Thomas H. Dickinson and Jack R. Crawford (Houghton Mifflin). An excellent collection — some of these fine recent plays available here for the first time.

"Waters of Life" by Julia P. Dabney (Torch Press). Another of these verse dramas.

"Plays of the 47 Workshop: Fourth Series" edited by George P. Baker (Brentano). Well constructed drama from Dr. Baker's emporium.

"Makers of Light" by Frederic Lansing Day (Brentano's). One of the literary plays which has had much appreciated if not eagerly attended performances.

"Playwrights of the New American Theater" by Thomas H. Dickinson (Macmillan). A difficult subject treated ably and in a manner thoroughly readable.

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THE BOOKMAN'S GUIDE TO FICTION

THE BOOKMAN *will present each month tabloid reviews of a selected list of recent fiction. This section will include also the books most in demand according to the current reports in "Books of the Month", compiled by the R. R. Bowker Company, The Baker and Taylor Company's "Retail Bookseller", and* THE BOOKMAN'S *"Monthly Score". Such books as the editor specially recommends are marked with a star.*

* THE GREEN HAT — Michael Arlen — *Doran.* Implacable and irresistible, Iris Storm doffs and dons her headgear for popular approval.

* MAYFAIR — Michael Arlen — *Doran.* The charming and not-so-charming people of Mr. Arlen's smart London society indulge in several plots.

THE CRYSTAL CUP — Gertrude Atherton — *Boni, Liveright.* The story of a girl who adopted masculine manners and clothes to disguise her intense femininity, and married to avoid love. (*See page 82.*)

THE DIVINE LADY — E. Barrington — *Dodd, Mead.* Lush interpretation of an historical amour.

GLORIOUS APOLLO — E. Barrington — *Dodd, Mead.* Anne Byron justified and the mad poet shown in all his "lustrous beauty". (*See page 73.*)

* DRUMS — Thomas Boyd — *Scribner.* Johnny Fraser of Revolutionary days is as appealing a young American as Tom Sawyer.

WEEK-END — Charles Brackett — *McBride.* Mild Arlenesque with a bow to Thomas Love Peacock. (*See page 76.*)

LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT — Dane Coolidge — *Dutton.* Each new volume about these dwellers at the edge of the desert paints startling, new beauties.

OLD YOUTH — Coningsby Dawson — *Cosmopolitan.* A pretty widow's quite conventional effort to recapture romance. (*See page 84.*)

LOVE — "Elizabeth" — *Doubleday, Page.* Another lady past her prime finds happiness and unhappiness through a gentleman not yet in his.

THE LORING MYSTERY — Jeffery Farnol — *Little, Brown.* A romantic mystery that has glamor and a refreshingly original love story.

* SO BIG — Edna Ferber — *Doubleday, Page.* Selina is a mother who has already won her way to the hearts of thousands of mothers — and sons, too.

* THE GREAT GATSBY — F. Scott Fitzgerald — *Scribner.* His best novel — a trifle bitter for morons — brilliantly conceived and as brilliantly produced.

* THE WHITE MONKEY — John Galsworthy — *Scribner.* A dog and a monkey make excellent symbolism for a story of love and society in reconstruction.

* SOUNDINGS — A. Hamilton Gibbs — *Little, Brown.* A modern love affair expertly analyzed from a modern man's viewpoint.

PETER VACUUM — Anthony Gibbs — *Dial.* Anthony Gibbs, Sir Philip's son, enters the fiction lists.

THE RECKLESS LADY — Philip Gibbs — *Doran.* Swift moving story of a mother and daughter caught by the rebellious and vivid period of reconstruction.

* BARREN GROUND — Ellen Glasgow — *Doubleday, Page.* Realism in the south. A beautifully written exposition, in some detail, of a woman's life.

THE THUNDERING HERD — Zane Grey — *Harper.* The buffalo for a novel replaces other cattle in this westerner's affections.

BENONI — Knut Hamsun — *Knopf.* The simple life in a Norwegian fishing village. Benoni himself is the simplest thing in the village. (*See page 86.*)

MONSIEUR RIPOIS AND NEMESIS — Louis Hemon — *Macmillan.* The unpleasant account of an obscene Frenchman among Englishwomen.

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NOT UNDER THE LAW — Grace Livingston Hill — *Lippincott.* Love conquers some of the usual trials and one or two not so usual.

THE SONS OF THE SHEIK — E. M. Hull — *Small, Maynard.* The author went into the desert to write it, but it might have been written at home.

A GOOD MAN — George F. Hummel — *Boni, Liveright.* A pleasantly cynical story about a modern publicity artist.

THE BEST LOVE STORIES OF 1924 — Muriel Miller Humphrey — *Small, Maynard.* Good hammock reading. Not too light, however, to show which way the wind of style and plot handling blows in current magazine fiction.

THE GEORGE AND THE CROWN — Sheila Kaye-Smith — *Dutton.* A study of man and nature, produced in the author's amazingly beautiful style.

* THE CONSTANT NYMPH — Margaret Kennedy — *Doubleday, Page.* The musical temperament makes a background for a study of charmingly balanced constancy and inconstancy.

THE CARILLON OF SCARPA — Flora Klickmann — *Putnam.* A romantic and entertaining account of declining royalty and some American visitors in a tiny kingdom of southern Europe.

* ARROWSMITH — Sinclair Lewis — *Harcourt, Brace.* Mr. Lewis's heroes still kick against the pricks. This time the struggle is waged in an idealistic young doctor's soul.

ROSALIE — Charles Major — *Macmillan.* Posthumous historical novel with less history than love.

* THE PAINTED VEIL — W. Somerset Maugham — *Doran.* An absorbing sex story with China as an exotic background.

INNER CIRCLE — Ethel Colburn Mayne — *Harcourt, Brace.* These stories subtly reflect the selves within selves of the people they portray.

LEWIS AND IRENE — Paul Morand — *Boni, Liveright.* The incompatible mating of two international financiers, a young French boulevardier and a serious Greek lady. (*See page 83.*)

MADONNA AND THE STUDENT — Isabel Neilson — *Huebsch.* An interesting study of postwar Germany through the eyes of a young Englishwoman.

HIS WIFE-IN-LAW — Marie Conway Oemler — *Century.* How many years does it take to make a wild woman ready for domesticity?

STOLEN IDOLS — E. Phillips Oppenheim — *Little, Brown.* Symbolism invades the realm of excitement over which this author holds determined sway.

RED ASHES — Margaret Pedler — *Doran.* A romance which many readers will adopt as their own, and a best-seller therefore.

THE PEASANTS — Ladislas Reymont — *Knopf.* Complete and monumental and profoundly rural is this prize work.

* THE RED LAMP — Mary Roberts Rinehart — *Doran.* Mystery, romance and one of the best character studies this novelist has ever written. (*See page 75.*)

THE CAROLINIAN — Rafael Sabatini — *Houghton Mifflin.* The usual robust romance with the scene changed to America.

* THE LITTLE FRENCH GIRL — Anne Douglas Sedgwick — *Houghton Mifflin.* The sweetest of recent heroines studies sweetly love and international characteristics.

UNVEILED — Beatrice Kean Seymour — *Seltzer.* How the marriage of two unattuned minds, each fine in its way, may lead to disaster.

THUNDERSTORM — G. B. Stern — *Knopf.* An ironical study of national emotions.

THE CRAZY FOOL — Donald Ogden Stewart — *A. and C. Boni.* Mr. Stewart finds a subject which fits his mad pen.

FIRECRACKERS — Carl Van Vechten — *Knopf.* A record of various experiments by several people whose sole ambition was to live beautifully. (*See page 84.*)

* THE MOTHER'S RECOMPENSE — Edith Wharton — *Appleton.* Excellent workmanship on a French triangle situation.

THE KENWORTHYS — Margaret Wilson — *Harper.* A melodrama of marriage and divorce, complicated by the eccentricities of an infant prodigy. (*See page 85.*)

* MRS. DALLOWAY — Virginia Woolf — *Harcourt.* One day in a woman's life — the infinitely small threads of human existence made luminous.

BEAU GESTE — Percival Christopher Wren — *Stokes.* Mystery and adventure handled with a real flair for gallantry.

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THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS —

BOOKS THAT MAY HAVE ESCAPED YOU

1. "Susan Lenox: Her Fall and Rise" by D. G. Phillips — an early realistic novel that is well worth reading now.

2. "The Girls" by Edna Ferber — Edna Ferber's best piece of writing.

3. "Enslaved" by John Masefield — containing several of this great poet's best poems, including "On Growing Old".

4. "The Splendid Spur" by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch — one of the gayest historical adventures ever penned.

5. "Were You Ever a Child?" by Floyd Dell — a wise and sturdy little book on education.

Lady Byron Rendered Divine — or Almost

FOLLOWING "The Divine Lady", E. Barrington gives us her story of the mad poet, Byron, and she has called it "Glorious Apollo" (Dodd, Mead). She makes him far from glorious, although at no point uninteresting. Beautiful, she calls him, over and over again, in lush and languorous descriptions. We see his long lashes and his translucent skin. We hear the ladies murmur his praises, and see them dash themselves before him in piteous abandon. For half of the book she builds up this emotional picture of the bard who had England by the heels; then she makes him an utter cad, and asks us to pity him. This is an interesting book, and so far as I have read them, the best of the Byronic romances; but it is the story of Anne Byron, not of the poet, himself — and it is a woman's book! I am sorry that she has taken for her central theme Byron's incestuous love for his half-sister; for it is a theme that cannot, in my opinion, be treated sentimentally, and the author has allowed herself a high degree of emotionalization in her portrayal of Augusta Leigh. Then, too, there is another serious fault; for although we hear much of Byron's brilliance, we scarcely ever are given a concrete example of it. Perhaps this brilliance was only cleverness, for it is more than probable that his personal charm made his conversation seem scintillating, when, in reality, it was as commonplace as the next man's.

Certainly, "Glorious Apollo" can in no way be favorably compared with Maurois's "Ariel". It is not the story of the poet. It is an old fashioned historical novel with a literary figure as its background and his unfortunate wife as its chief character. That it will be read even more than "Ariel", I imagine; for what woman does not like the story of a glorious Don Juan, and of a woman who was brave in spite of him. The author has given us a dramatic character description of Lady Byron. She stands out as perfectly real, and entirely understandable. For this, we can give the author all praise; but as an interpretation of a figure which, in the light of modern psychology, cries for interpretation (in spite of the dozen or so volumes published last year), it is a failure. Since it was written obviously as a romance, it is perhaps unfair to call attention to its other shortcomings. As sweetly savored romance it is excellent, and it is, on the surface, accurate.

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Literary but Eminent Victorians

IN these days when we spend much time discussing current letters, a book such as Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's "Charles Dickens and Other Victorians" (Putnam) is welcome for many reasons. In the first place it is, of course, well written. It contains a large measure of thoughtful comment on life as well as letters. Then, too, quite apart from the merits of the writing, the book is printed beautifully. The essays on Dickens are masterpieces. The three on Thackeray do not strike me as being so interesting, but they are none the less profound. The best thing in the book, and one of the wisest ventures in criticism I have read for many months, is that on "The Victorian Background". In this chapter he displays one of the reasons why it is impossible to judge the men of our own age: because we cannot have any proper sense of our own historical background, we can no more see past literature in the light of history than we can see current literature in the light of itself. He writes:

> But I recall myself to my purpose; which in two following lectures shall be as literary, as merely critical, as I can keep it. To-day I have set out the theme and tried to show you how it had perforce to occupy men's minds and — since artists and imaginative writers must have feelings as well as intellect — almost to dominate our literature and art in the last century. In that domination of interest you will find implicit, and will easily evolve for yourselves, the reason why the novel in particular, being a social form of art and lending itself in so many ways to episode, discussion, even direct preaching, became political as it never was in the days of Richardson and Fielding, Scott and Jane Austen. The preponderance of the theme being granted, I next propose to examine how it took possession of two persons of genius: a man and a woman; the man assertive, personally ambitious, full of fire and opulent phrase; the woman staid, self-abnegating, to me wearing the quiet, with the intensity, of a noble statue. I can conceive, if one would trace in literature the operation of a compelling idea, no two exponents more essentially disparate than Benjamin Disraeli and Elizabeth Gaskell.

Taboo

WILBUR DANIEL STEELE is a novelist and a short story writer of whom we are only beginning to be justly proud. His new book, "Taboo" (Harcourt, Brace), is a brave and brilliant performance. That it is terrifying should not bar it from the homes of those accustomed to the modern sex story. There is assuredly nothing censorable in it. In a way, it deals with the same theme which, in another paragraph, I discuss in relation to "Glorious Apollo"; i.e., the tendency toward incestuous love. Now that is not a pleasant story for a book, nor would it be just to Mr. Steele's superb novel to say that it is actually his theme, nor would it be just to him to tell his story; for its slow development makes it, in a sense, a sort of psychological mystery story. It is not a jolly tale; but it is handled with such force and clarity that it not only holds the attention but calls out our terror and our pity. Here is a major writer, a writer who has rhythm and depth and a fine sense of character! There is little more to be said about this book, except that it is so important that you should read it.

Glenna, his heroine, is a modern girl who faces problems of startling import and fights them to a conclusion. I am not sure that many authors would have had the courage to give the story its present ending. I am not sure that it is the logical ending; but that is Mr. Steele's business, and he should know. One small quarrel one may have with his style. His flapper language, when he uses it in the midst

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of an otherwise mellifluous and fluid manner, strikes me as oddly out of place and not particularly well done. Otherwise, here is a fine and a moving story, told with restraint and precision.

A Great Mystery Story

I CAN think of no present day writer of fiction who performs quite so consistently as Mary Roberts Rinehart. She never fails to write a good book, when she writes a book at all. "The Red Lamp" (Doran) is the best mystery story I have ever read, and it is more than that; it contains at least one of its author's finest characterizations, that of Professor William A. Porter. The professor is wistful, he is amusing, he is cunning, he is fumbling. All of us have seen his like in the classroom. Projected into a series of astonishing events, he goes through them with academic calm and intensity. When she decided to give us this exciting story through his eyes, Mrs. Rinehart not only set herself the task of constructing an elaborate puzzle novel, but the further technical difficulty of making it every step of the way the charming professor's. She has succeeded admirably. Her earlier mystery stories have been immensely popular; but no one of them is so thrilling, or so well rounded as this.

Her men characters are excellent; but she does not neglect her women, and Mrs. Porter is as appealing as her husband. Romance, too, plays its part; but it is always subordinated to the general theme of the story, the working out of the puzzle. I have been completely and annoyingly fooled. Not once in the course of the book did I have the slightest idea of the conclusion, nor has the author employed foul means to attain this effect. She is consistent. She is as clear as crystal. The greatness of her mystery stories lies in the fact that she sustains two interests throughout. Because of her ability to make all events seem real, there is not only plot interest, but character interest; and in the broad canvas she paints in "The Red Lamp" there is not one dull spot, not one poorly drawn character. For sheer entertainment, there is no other book to be equally recommended. And it is far more than entertaining, it is a first class piece of writing.

A Genial Poet

CHARLES HANSON TOWNE, editor, literary agent, poet, novelist, etc., etc., has always been, at heart, the poet. He has written exquisite verses, some of them fragile, some of them with a certain indefinable power. Now he has chosen to collect what he considers to be the best of these in a volume of "Selected Poems" (Appleton). It is a good book, and it is filled with color and beauty; for Mr. Towne is an admirer of Keats and of Shelley, and he writes in the old tradition of music and simplicity.

Perhaps the best poem in the book is one which was originally published in this magazine. It is called "Spring and the Angel", and has lines of real splendor. When a man has so many abilities, particularly those of humor, we are prone to forget his real gifts. We must not forget Mr. Towne as a poet. Some of his lyrics are memorable, some of his sonnets are hard to equal in American literature, and it is not patronizing to say that his verse has also a quality of popularity that is due, not to any overlarding of sentiment,

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but to honesty, sincerity and the self-insistence on clarity of thought. He is fond of people and of literature and of nature. These three loves dominate these pages. Some of his occasional poems I do not like. When he allows himself a satirical note, as in "Baboon", it is expert and convincing.

I should like to quote one of his sonnets; one that, while not his best, shows a peculiar fondness of his own, which is for grass. In many of his poems you will find it used, both as an image and as the subject of felicitous description:

THE GRASS

Sometimes when I am weary, I have dipped
  Into this great green gospel opened wide,
  And read the tale which no one has denied —
That God is good. With honey life has dripped
When I the ancient knowledge drank and sipped,
  Finding new meanings on the page's side,
  Fresh wonder where the sweet inscriptions glide
Through the illuminated manuscript.

Enchanting story! How the record runs
  Through the vast world upon each scented page,
  With marginal designs and glossaries,
Footnotes and flowery borders, and the sun's
  Eternal illustration! Youth and age
  Alike can read such magic words as these.

Ageless and Timely

OVER nine hundred years ago a gentle, or probably gentle, lady in Japan wrote a book of interminable length called "The Tale of Genji" (Houghton Mifflin). Her name, like that of her heroine, was Murasaki. The first volume, a complete story in itself, is now translated by Arthur Waley, and strikes me as being one of the most thoroughly modern romances of the year. What a wise little person the Lady Murasaki must have been. She has pictured her hero, Genji, as a most personable and unmoral young man, although she spends no time reflecting on his amorous pursuits. She simply recounts them. He always finds himself an excuse for his actions, and they are naïve excuses to be sure, but just as good as any other, as long as he believes them himself. Genji was the emperor's son, and he lived in a time when conversation was made in poetry, and the best of friends exchanged "essays and poems" as marks of esteem and affection. He was always trying to find out what woman was like, this Genji, and, although he gained much experience, he never seemed to attain his goal of wisdom. If it were only for the background of Japanese court life in these far off days, the book would be worth reading; but it is more than that, it is the story of a Japanese Don Juan.

Timelier and yet less timely, is Charles Brackett's "Week-End" (McBride), a short novel of mannered Americans, written somewhat in the manner of Thomas Love Peacock, so ably imitated by Elinor Wylie, Aldous Huxley and others. In justice, too, to Mr. Arlen, we must state that Mr. Brackett has undoubtedly read "These Charming People". "Week-End" is entertaining, and a trifle mad, and not half so good as most of Mr. Brackett's fine short stories one sees in the magazines. However, if you like mad foolery, and if you think the American smart set as foolish as that of Arlen's "May Fair", do snatch this small volume up and find yourself for a few moments indulging in an odd concoction of insanity and epigram.

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A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

AMBROSE BIERCE AND "MOXON'S MASTER"

By Edna Kenton

AMBROSE BIERCE has been called a "formula" story teller, but I do not recall that his master recipe for the short story has ever been stated in scientific terms. Neither do I recall that any critic has picked out from the whole of his work the master story that keys all the others. "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge", "A Horseman in the Sky", "The Boarded Window", "The Man and the Snake" are frequently cited examples of his so-called formula tales whose fame has depended on the effect of the first surprise, and, frequently, on their having been read as single stories and not in relation to others. "Formulas", it may be said, are not discovered so easily as this.

For Bierce has been read generally, by those who have read him at all, in isolated purple patches; seldom or never in the mass. There has been reason for this: his books, since 1872, have appeared sporadically, unheralded, under varying imprints. In 1909 his "Collected Works" were issued, but the man's fame, after almost half a century of extraordinary output, was still so underground that none but devotees were likely to indulge in the twelve volume set.

Four of these twelve volumes are now accessible to the general reader in the American Library, published by Albert and Charles Boni — that series whose editors avowedly pass by American "classics" for the half forgotten, unprocurable, or but lately appreciated American writers who, by newer standards, played a gallant rôle in our young cultural development. And the reading at a sitting, so to say, of "In the Midst of Life", "Can Such Things Be?", "The Monk and the Hangman's Daughter" (which includes the "Fantastic Fables"), and "The Devil's Dictionary", is highly recommended for an idle week end trip. We emerge from such continuous communing with an author, carrying away impressions quite other than those received from a mere desultory reading; and to live in such fashion for a few days with Ambrose Bierce is to uncover, not a perfunctory formula, but his whole attitude to "ghost" and to "man". One of the interesting revelations that attends the mass reading of these four volumes is that "The Devil's Dictionary" gives away the attitude, as the stories and fables give away "The Devil's Dictionary". And, as a curious result, some of the "famous" stories drift imperceptibly to second place, and others far less known move to first; "Moxon's Master", for instance.

Bierce's thoughtful provision of a glossary to his works offers two definitions that may be quoted at just this point: "*Ghost.* The outward and visible sign of an inward fear; *Intention.* The mind's sense of the prevalence of one set of influences over another set, an effect whose cause is the imminence, immediate or remote, of the performance of an involuntary act." "Moxon's Master" is not one of the frequently cited examples of Bierce's art and artfulness, and, at first glance, may seem to hold no commerce with either "ghost" or "intention"; for Moxon's

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master was no floating wraith, and Moxon's intention is never stated. But Bierce's whole conception of man and his fears lies in this tale and illumines all the others.

The story begins with a question from the first person narrator: "Are you serious — do you really believe that a machine thinks?" And presently Moxon answers:

"What is a machine? The word has been variously defined. Here is one definition from a popular dictionary: 'Any instrument or organization by which power is applied and made effective, or a desired effect produced.' Well, then, is not man a machine? And you will admit he thinks — or thinks he thinks. . . . I do believe that a machine thinks about the work that it is doing."

The rest, just short of the bitter end, is discussion, broken by Moxon's frequent disappearances into his machine shop, where none but he may enter. And the end: Moxon, in his shop, sitting across a chessboard, facing his antagonist. This antagonist not more than five feet in height, "with proportions suggesting those of a gorilla", the shoulders disproportionately broad, the arms disproportionately long — Moxon's "machine", an automaton chess player which, as Moxon uttered a triumphant "Checkmate!", began to whirr. "A slight but continuous convulsion appeared to have possession of it. In body and head it shook like a man with the palsy or ague, and the motion augmented every moment until the entire figure was in violent agitation." Suddenly it leaped to its feet and lunged forward across the table. "Moxon tried to throw himself backward out of reach, but he was too late; I saw the horrible thing's hands close upon his throat, his own clutch its wrists. . . . " Read "Moxon's Master", and then, in its light, reread "The Man and the Snake", "A Horseman in the Sky", "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge", even "The Boarded Window". You will not repeat the shock of the first surprise, but you will have the finer delight of seeing Harker Braynton's intentions and fears in presence of the Snake, his master; Carter Druse's "performance of an involuntary act" before the horseman in the sky; Peyton Farquehar on Owl Creek Bridge in the veritable act of "running down"; Murlock, in "The Boarded Window", rushing too swiftly upon his fear and then retreating from it, only to meet the ultimate horror.

For always, in the multiplied works, there is a "key" story that unlocks the others, and, above all, the door to the author's "intention", if ever he has one. It is doubtful that Bierce himself saw his subject inevitably determined by the prevalence of one set of influences over another set. But we cannot call him the great exception to his own view of man. If man is a machine set in motion by fear, and Bierce saw him so, he must write about him so. And in the seventy tales of "In the Midst of Life" and "Can Such Things Be?" he most surely does.

"The Monk and the Hangman's Daughter" is another affair altogether, being a short novel done in collaboration with Dr. Gustave Adolf Danziger, from a reputed German original by Richard Voss. Mr. Vincent Starrett calls it, perhaps a little enthusiastically, "that great prose poem". Bierce's preface to this work suggests that the intentions of everyone concerned in it were a little blurred. For he "Englished" a translated tale not precisely Biercesque.

But "The Devil's Dictionary" is Bierce. We have most of it in the tales;

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but, on the other hand, we find most of the tales in "The Devil's Dictionary". Read together, as they should be, they are perceived to perform an extraordinary contra dance which is quite worthy of attention.

The Devil's Dictionary; The Monk and the Hangman's Daughter — Fantastic Fables; In the Midst of Life — Tales of Soldiers and Civilians; Can Such Things Be? By Ambrose Bierce. Albert and Charles Boni.

POEMS AND POETICAL EXERCISES

By Hildegarde Fillmore

THE dual literary personality of John Erskine is well demonstrated in his latest collection of verse, "Sonata". Here we have the scholar, with a lively interest in technical dexterity, approving the inclusion of verse that has a distinct copybook flavor. At the same time, the poet, with his heart set on a distant goal of beauty, brings to the little volume poems that convey authentic artistic conviction. More than half of the twelve pieces in the book prove that the poetry of a man of letters need not always exhibit a certain quality of fine desiccation that we are accustomed to link with the creative endeavors of college professors. There are poems here quick with the breath of life. But there are also pieces that can only be characterized as poetic acrobatics. To this reviewer a lengthy description of a Fifth Avenue bus driver's day executed in Spencerian stanzas can never be anything but grotesque. Such incongruity between form and substance is bewildering in a poet of Dr. Erskine's facility. For a better alliance between spirit and style there is the title poem which concerns an artist's model who turns landscape painter. It is significant as a comment on the origins of artistic creation and the abuses of appreciation. Perhaps it is truly the passionate resignation of the scholar that speaks thus at its conclusion:

So few, so few! I see the curious eyes
Studying as though the pictures were a scroll
Marked with lost symbols or designs insane.
Yet there the path is written, and the end;
From silence first, through silence into speech,
And afterwards through speech to loneliness —
Something this world we love so cannot say,
Earth cannot, nor the ocean, nor the sky.

Attempts at a free cadenced form in the collection are only moderately successful, though there is one lovely piece of imagery called "Sea-Gull" that shows a sure touch and an ear attuned to the peculiar rhythms of unrhymed, unmetered verse. But it is in the sonnet sequences that Dr. Erskine attains the greatest freedom and breadth of expression. His particular idiom seems best suited to a form that links cerebral and emotional ecstasy. In this reflective, often somber mood he produces poetry that far outstrips in significance his attempts at the vigorous, dramatic narrative. On the whole the book is a collection of unequal worth, though the best things in it follow consistently a driving urge towards the scholarly ideal of beauty.

Where a scholar-poet has the words to express his own peculiar vision of the beauty of existence, the mystic has something that goes beyond words. The poetry of A. E., like that of other mystics, seems at times to borrow its breath from another sphere. Simple forms and simple words suffice to link this little world with some bigger, more wonderful existence that hovers just beyond our reach. "Voices of the Stones" is as artless, and in some ways

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as important a collection as Housman's "Last Poems". But the mood of the Irishman soars and subsides rather more frequently than does that of the Shropshire lad. Nature, interpreted by that curious pagan-pious quality of the Celtic heart, weaves a succession of spells over the reader. In "Resurrection", a poem so exquisite that we should really quote it all, we see how closely the thought streams of formal and natural religion run:

Hearts which I had crucified
With my heart that tortured them;
Penitence, unfallen pride —
These my thorny diadem!

Thou wouldst ease in heaven my pain,
Oh, thou fiery, bleeding thing!
All thy wounds will wake again
At the heaving of a wing.

All thy dead with thee shall rise,
Dies Irae. If the soul
To the Everliving flies,
There shall meet it at its goal

Love that Time has overlaid,
Deaths that we again must die —
Let the dragons we have made
In their caverns sleeping lie.

The prescience of this poetry makes of every image a vibrating thing. And yet, according to modern canons, this is not imagist poetry. Let us say, rather, that it is poetry infused with a spirit as old as Nature and as magical. To be most effective, such songs should be brief, as most of these are. In "Mountain Wind", for instance, with its four quatrains, we have an almost perfect example of the lyric cry, contracted sharply into pictures. Though the essence of great poetry is its universality, an Irish poet does not forget to celebrate the glory of his national consciousness. "When the red Gaelic sun has set", he desires passionately to be remembered by a prophetic word and a valorous deed. This is the theme of "Michael", the final and only long poem in the book. Here the poet meditates on the mystic significance of the death of an Irish revolutionist. For all its smoothness of texture, this long piece of pictorial philosophy lacks something of the sharply chiseled beauty of the short lyrics. In them the magic of words is never thinned to a mere harmony of sound; it transfers the very heartbeat of existence.

From this other-worldly plane it is difficult to approach with enthusiasm such verse as goes to make up "The King of the Black Isles". J. U. Nicolson is a versifier with a sensuous richness of conventional language and a felicity of phrase that marks the work of many minor poets. Though there are several times as many pieces in this volume as appear in Dr. Erskine's "Sonata", they often lack sincerity, even of an academic sort. And the cloying love theme that runs through the work is muddy when compared to the clear stream of feeling that distinguishes A. E.'s writing. Among other attempts to revive the amorous lucubrations of other ages, Mr. Nicolson has taken on the erotica of the Bible. Altogether the facility that goes into the book is pretty self-destructive, and it is no mean facility, for among the too lush passages may be found the occasional happy phrase, the inevitable line of poetry that is good, if not great.

To turn from these representatives of the conservative school to the so-called "new movements", there has been no recent event comparable to the publication of the imagist poems of H. D. in one collection. Undisputed she holds her laurels. So much has been written in praise and analysis of her work that there is little that one can say that will not repeat the comments of her critics. The present volume, beautiful in format as well as context, contains all of her work. We can turn with delight to such familiar

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things as "Orchard" — "I saw the first pear as it fell". Then there are those tiny bits, crystal clear, of "The Pool" and "Oread". If there could be a pattern for such a vague and beautiful form as imagist poetry, these lines would certainly serve as such.

OREAD

Whirl up, sea —
whirl your pointed pines,
splash your great pines
on our rocks,
hurl your green over us,
cover us with your pools of fir.

Like a stream moving towards the sea, the poetic depth of her work increases as we go further into the collection. By various and beautiful cadence schemes she preserves the sound pictures of Greek poetry. Taking as her actors the gods and goddesses of classic myth, she has built a new stage setting for them by her unique and subtle art. In this part of the book there are some extraordinary translations and adaptations, as well as some pieces that grow out of her own richly classical, yet wholly unfettered, genius. We have always cherished a conceit that her poems are vines — dark and strong — clasping a Greek column. They make a living thing of cold marble. Starring the rich verbiage there appears often a vibrant, scarlet passion flower. The poems in this book show a peak of sensitivity to sense impression that has never been attained by poets of the old or new school. They mark a height unmistakable in its blinding beauty.

Sonata. By John Erskine. Duffield and Company.
Voices of the Stones. By "A. E." Macmillan Company.
The King of the Black Isles. By J. U. Nicolson. Covici.
Collected poems of H. D. By "H. D." Boni and Liveright.

A GENTLEMANLY ARRANGEMENT

By W. S. Lewis

IN 1757 Horace Walpole wrote to a friend: "On Monday next the Officina Arbuteana opens in form. The Stationers' Company, that is, Mr. Dodsley, Mr. Tonson, etc. are summoned to meet here on Sunday night. And with what do you think we open? *Cedite, Romanii Impressores* — with nothing under *Graii Carmina.* I found him [that is, Gray] in town last week: he had brought his two Odes to be printed. I snatched them out of Dodsley's hands, and they are to be the first-fruits of my press." The two odes were Gray's "Bard" and "Progress of Poesy", and the sponsors summoned from London were the richest publishers in England. It is a pretty picture of the time when a man of the world who was, incidentally, a litterateur, might arrange things as he pleased.

The press was an easy solution for Walpole who was never so pride-full as when touching his own literary output. The whole business of public publication he had found vulgar and distasteful. Grub Street and all that pertained to it was abhorrent to him. "To make anything one writes, especially poetry, public," he wrote to Henry Fox eleven years before, "is giving everybody leave under one's own hand to call one fool." But to publish privately, doing only a few copies for one's friends, was a different, and an ideal, arrangement. And then, always as an amateur and collector of rarities, what a pleasure to bring out, in limited editions, the curious and the unique, exactly when and how one pleased!

For over thirty years Walpole kept his press going, coming to a graceful close with Miss Hannah More's verses. There were, of course, exasperating

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moments. The Press was never run for profit, but at times Walpole did try to make expenses, and then: "The London booksellers play me all manner of tricks. If I do not allow them ridiculous profit, they will do nothing to promote the sale; and when I do, they buy up the impression, and sell it at an advanced price before my face. . . . In truth, the plague I have had in every shape with my own printers, engravers, the booksellers, etc., besides my own trouble, have almost discouraged me from what I took up at first as an amusement, but which has produced very little of it." Still, it had been amusing to show the press to visiting ladies who, when they peered closer, found verses addressed to themselves. "You may imagine, whatever the poetry was, that the gallantry of it succeeded." Even Chesterfield, for whom Walpole had slight regard, upon strolling into the library at Strawberry one day found a printed sheet which hoped that "the friend of Pope" might "bless with some immortal page" the Strawberry Hill Printing Office. But these, of course, were trifles, and it is true that the gentleman-author's weightier works did involve him in a world of trouble and controversy. The very scarcity of his editions was often, in later years, an expense to him, and we find him complaining that when the King of Poland asked for the "Anecdotes of Painting" he had to pay thirteen guineas for a set although it had been published at thirty shillings less than twenty years before — a purchase which may give modern collectors of limited editions a certain perverse pleasure.

Walpole, with whom the collecting of memorabilia was a passion, kept a journal of the Printing Office. This Journal was recently discovered and has now been edited by the Prince of Walpolians, Dr. Paget Toynbee. It is not only indispensable to collectors of Walpole, but to collectors of the private presses. The press at Strawberry Hill was not quite the first private press in England, twenty years before one had died in infancy, but it was by all odds the most famous. It is true that Mr. Updike, who must be allowed the last word upon typography, has called its printing "indifferent", singling out the Lucan from the rest as deserving of "moderate praise", but students of the period will find his strictures easy to bear. The present book with its editing which is beyond praise makes scrap paper of nearly everything that has previously been published about the "Officina Arbuteana". It shows how graceful a work of pure scholarship may become in the hands of a master workman. It has the further merit of having been done by the Chiswick Press, and so becomes, in its own right, a necessary "item" for lovers of good book making.

Journal of the Printing-Office at Strawberry Hill. By Horace Walpole, with notes by Paget Toynbee, M.A., D.Litt. Limited edition. Houghton Mifflin Company.

MEN, WOMEN AND MANIKINS

By Isabel Paterson

FOR me to assume an attitude of impartial criticism of "The Crystal Cup", or any other of Gertrude Atherton's novels, would be sheer pretence. I am biased, if not totally disqualified, by my enthusiastic admiration of the author, which cannot be set aside, even hypothetically, for the consideration of her work "on its merits", because her books are charged with her personality.

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Not that they are intimate confessions nor factual autobiography; it is self evident that they are very far from being anything of the kind; but the dynamic quality with which she was so greatly and fortunately dowered by nature flows through the point of her pen; and her attitude toward life, which she has not only accepted but welcomed and enjoyed, determines her choice and treatment of material.

Always her characters are positive. Confronted by the dilemma which is prerequisite to a story, they arrive at definite decisions and act upon them with energy and even ruthlessness. And, though in some instances the power which moves them is felt as directly owing to the writer rather than to the fictive characters in their own right — which is the final achievement of creative art — nevertheless it is genuine, and it serves its purpose: to rivet the reader's attention.

The degree of illusion she creates varies considerably. In "The Crystal Cup", the problem is the main thing, rather than the subtleties of character analysis, although the story hinges on character. Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that it is a question of a certain type breaking through fortuitous and adverse circumstance to find a normal channel of expression.

Gita Carteret, inheriting the beauty and charm which made the women of her family successively the reigning belles of their period, was warped by the unhappy experiences of her girlhood into a fierce antagonism toward men. Her father was a rake, a spendthrift, and a drunken brute. Besides reducing his wife and child to poverty, he exposed them to the insulting gallantries of his raffish associates. Gita grew up hating her own femininity, wishing herself a man; and in self defense she dressed and acted as much like a boy as possible. But at twenty-two, already an orphan, she found herself an heiress in a small way, through the death of her grandmother. The singular expedient to which she resorted to secure her share of life while excluding men from her personal scheme of things, and the unexpected result of it all, provides a very brisk plot, enlivened with a touch of melodrama and one scene (at least) of fine tense drama. It is safe to say "The Crystal Cup" will be among the best sellers. It marches.

The titular figures of Paul Morand's "Lewis and Irene" are symbols rather than types. They resemble the angularized conventions of modern painting, which returns to the archaic in search of novelty. Lewis and Irene occupy the whole picture, like Aucassin and Nicolette, with hardly any background or perspective; yet they are distinctively of the present — contemporary myths, with a basis of fact like all myths.

Lewis is a composite portrait of the speculative promoter, nominally a Frenchman, but adventuring in the field of international finance. In taking up an option on a Sicilian sulphur mining property he found himself outmatched by a Greek firm, the Apostolatos Bank, represented by Irene Apostolatos, a young and classically beautiful Greek widow. Irene was a practical business woman, not a gambler like Lewis, but the daughter of generations of shrewd Greek traders and money changers. Drawn together by their unlikeness, Irene and Lewis fell in love, married, endeavored to give up their work in hope of attaining domestic happiness. Boredom ensued. Irene secretly returned to the bank. Lewis was unfaithful, with a discarded mistress, simply because it was not in him to be true. Becoming aware of his

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behavior immediately, Irene left him without parley.

Yet though they could make an end of their marriage, they could not sever their business relations. When they ceased to be lovers they became partners. Whether this is meant as irony is not clear. Morand strives for detachment, carefully avoids any hint of a moral or a thesis. The sensualist Lewis is just a bundle of appetites and aptitudes without passion or real intelligence; he has the sleek sufficiency of a beast of prey. Irene is merely his opposite. Their behavior has no ethical meaning; it is like a series of chemical reactions. The book is clever, thin, and dry. Who would have thought these young men had so little blood in them?

Gelett Burgess has always been too far ahead of the literary crowd for his own good. By the time fashion catches up with his witty inventions, or even comes upon the track of them, his pioneer work has been forgotten by all but a few superfluous veterans with impolitely retentive memories. Almost two decades ago he wrote a deliciously impossible and farcical comedy, framed upon the vagaries of a fantastic dame called "Lady Méchante". This spirit of mischief satirized with a butterfly touch all the aesthetic fads of the moment, and a few which she foresaw — it was, for instance, an admirable spoof on "modern" art, though that was some time before even the first Armoury exhibit of Cubism.

After exhausting the resources of polite culture and the novelty of exoticism, Lady Méchante fixed her affections upon a heroic coal heaver, endeavored to tame him as a parlor pet, and finally, I think, was carried off by the recalcitrant hero on the back of a Percheron — whither and to what end, I now forget.

Campaspe Lorillard, the leading lady of Carl Van Vechten's "Firecrackers", is a dim reflection of that sparkling creature. Her perverseness is deliberate by comparison; her whims are bookish and derivative. She is a female Tomlinson. "Oh, this I have thought and that I was told, and that I have read, quoth he: and the other I heard that another man heard from a Prince in Muscovy."

Campaspe's coal heaver was a furnace mender, Gunnar O'Grady, who was seeking to realize the good life by the prescription of Hippias. Igniting at contact, their explosion had its effect upon other inflammable personages — for instance, Paul Moody, the young husband of an elderly but rich wife, and Wintergreen Whatshername, and more remotely, upon the acrobatic twins, Hugo and Robin — but space lacks to explain how or why. And even if it didn't, what's the use? Mr. Van Vechten quotes scornfully the dictum of a forgotten English actor, that "you must first tell the public that you're going to do so and so; you must tell them that you are doing it, and then that you have done it; and then *perhaps* they will understand you."

There is another way, though it is rather irregular. That is, actually to do it. Mr. Burgess did, hence I am able to hazard a guess at Mr. Van Vechten's intention. But I may be wrong; the resemblance is only partial. "Lady Méchante" was both witty and humorous. Well, there is still the sure refuge of invincible ignorance.

Coningsby Dawson's "Old Youth" is a denatured version of W. L. George's "Second Blooming". The best one can say of it is that it is perfectly innocuous — much ado about nothing. A widow at thirty-six, with money, good looks, and no reason to reproach herself for any undutifulness towards

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her invalid husband while he was alive, Eve Carrington might reasonably consider herself free to search for her belated romance, even to marry again. As an obstacle, a dictatorial father-in-law fails to seem impressive; and Mr. Carrington senior becomes plumb ridiculous when he bursts out: "Create your own hell. Paint your face as you've painted your gown. Seek the lover of whom, all the time we've been wrangling, you've been dreaming. But I ask one decency — leave your husband's, my dead son's name out of your intimacies. You've won the liberty you coveted. You can go." Upon which Eve directed her chauffeur: "To New York — to my dressmaker's and milliner's."

Nothing could be more suitable; the rest is a parade of manikins.

An inappropriate and almost disastrous suggestion of the Victorian Sunday school story lurks between the lines of Margaret Wilson's valorous investigation of abnormal temperaments in "The Kenworthys". It brings to mind such gruesomely improving tales as Mrs. Sherwood's "The Fairchild Family", in which the Fairchild infants were taken to gaze upon the dreadful remains of a gibbeted highwayman, as an object lesson against disobedience or stealing apples or the like juvenile peccadillo. Miss Wilson is obviously alarmed by the spread of feminism and the demands of the new woman; but her warning is so emphatic it sounds hysterical. One cannot but reflect that the actual story of the Kenworthys might have been exactly the same if Mrs. Jim Kenworthy had been an anti. None of the action depends upon any of her abstract opinions.

Jim Kenworthy was engaged to Emily Fiske, but in a fit of manly indignation, provoked by discovering a shocking book in her possession, he rushed off and married a suffragist. Emily was entirely innocent; she had not yet read the book, had got it by accident, and had no notion what it contained. Jim knew at sight! The moral is — but no, there isn't any moral to that special episode; it wouldn't fit the author's thesis. Jim was a man, and chartered to read evil books. Emily was an angel, and the virtue of Victorian angels was more fragile than Venetian glass.

Jim and his feminist wife had one child, a boy who grew to be nearly six feet tall at the age of fourteen, and a genius in the mechanical line. No, that isn't the moral either — do not be hasty. No credit is due to young Bronson's mother for his genius nor even for his physique; that just happened. But she was wholly responsible for his headstrong egotism and his morbid brooding upon sex problems. She had divorced Jim and married again. The boy hated her and his stepfather, wishing to be with his father; but his behavior when he came to Jim for the stipulated annual six weeks was outrageous until Emily subdued him by the magic of feminine cajolery.

Emily, by the way, had married Jim's brother Bob, a weak, dishonest, maudlin fellow, who naturally had a very poor opinion of Jim's wife. Such men are always strong for the home and old fashioned women who will take in washing or inherit money to support them. But about Bronson — Emily gave him back the faith his mother had shattered. Queer, because the first thing Emily said to Bronson was an obvious lie — it is quite confusing, like the incident of the wicked book.

Aside from these ethical tangles, including the general implication that anyone marrying a feminist runs the risk of gigantic and incorrigible offspring afflicted with genius, the story

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is rather original and interesting. The author evades the real difficulties of her subject, by having a good many things happen off-stage; and she piles up the agony unscrupulously to secure an impressive climax; moreover, she never lets Jim's wife appear in her own defence, but keeps her just out of sight, to be taken on faith, like a nursery bogy. No matter; the whole book, with its earnest muddle of melodrama, propaganda, ingenuousness and ingenuity, is quite readable.

Simplicity is a highly desirable quality in fiction, but like all good things, it may be overdone. Knut Hamsun's "Benoni" suffers from this excess of merit. In "Growth of the Soil" Hamsun's method was ideally fitted to his subject. Isak, the pioneer farmer, was realized as an elemental force, possessed of the instinctive wisdom by which the leaves put forth in spring and the wild creatures know their paths. Hamsun understands the processes of nature.

The mysteries of business are beyond his comprehension. He nearly starved to death here in America, when he was a young man, which indicates a singular incapacity in any industrial effort. Anyhow, in "Benoni" he makes it plain that he believes success in money matters can only be owing to either of two causes, luck or sharp practice. By sheer blind luck, the peasant fisherman, Benoni, acquired a fishing schooner, a house, shops and wharves; and finally forty thousand dollars in cash fell into his hands for the mineral rights of a heap of rocks he had bought for next to nothing. But he got very little benefit of it all; it could not widen his range of satisfactions, nor even win him the girl he wanted, the minister's daughter. And he was always an easy prey of the local banker, one of the sharp gentry.

Except for the unreality of the financial deals, "Benoni" is a faithful and therefore slightly dull transcript of the daily and yearly round of existence in a Norway fishing village. Apparently it is the first of two volumes; the second will be awaited patiently.

The Crystal Cup. By Gertrude Atherton. Boni and Liveright.
Lewis and Irene. By Paul Morand. Boni and Liveright.
Firecrackers. By Carl Van Vechten. Alfred A. Knopf.
Old Youth. By Coningsby Dawson. Cosmopolitan Book Corporation.
The Kenworthys. By Margaret Wilson. Harper and Brothers.
Benoni. By Knut Hamsun. Alfred A. Knopf.

MODERN SPANISH LITERATURE

By Ernest Boyd

THE standard history of Spanish literature, both in Spanish and in English, is Mr. Fitzmaurice Kelly's familiar tome, but even in its most recent edition this work is entirely inadequate in its treatment of contemporary authors. In French and German there are similar histories, written by professors, with the usual incoherent last chapter, in which living writers are mentioned at haphazard and accorded a non-committal line or two. It was in order to remedy this peculiar state of affairs, largely due to the lack in Spain itself of a competent and succinct account of Spanish literature in the last half century, that Mr. Bell was invited to write the present work. Mr. Bell is the author of an excellent history of Portuguese literature; he has written extensively about Spain and things Spanish, and he is one of those Englishmen, like Fitzmaurice Kelly and Crawford Flitch, who have devoted their

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lives to the intensive study of the life and literature of the Iberian Peninsula. His name is a guarantee of scholarship combined with intimate first hand knowledge.

Mr. Bell wisely confines himself to the Castillan writers, that is to say, he makes no attempt to discuss Basque and Catalan literatures; and the dialect writers of Murcia, Valencia and Extremadura, as well as the Latin Americans, receive only passing mention when their work bears upon the main development of Castillan. He divides the modern period into two parts, "hinging respectively on the cardinal years 1868 and 1898", and his survey extends from Pereda to Ramón Gómez de la Serna, with five main divisions treating of "The Novel", "The Drama", "Lyric Poetry", "The Essay" and "Criticism and Scholarship". The author's desire for comprehensiveness has resulted in the inclusion of names at the close of each section which have no more than a catalogue interest, as Mr. Bell does not deem them important enough to give them space for comment. So far as the average reader is concerned, these might well have been omitted, and even students of Spanish will not be greatly enlightened by such references as he can give them.

Save for this negligible objection, no fault can be found with Mr. Bell's history. In his treatment of writers worthy of detailed comment, his choice, his sense of proportion, and his critical estimates are admirable. What will at once strike the American reader, who is not a specialist, is the extent to which the best contemporary prose writers have been translated, and, consequently, the great helpfulness of this book in arriving at some general perspective of their importance. The novel of the 1868 period, for example, is represented by Pedro Antonio de Alarcón, José María de Pereda, Pérez Galdós, Emilia Pardo Bazán, Juan Valera and the surviving Armando Palacio Valdés. With the exception of Pereda, all of these authors were made available for American readers in the late 'eighties and 'nineties. Alarcón's "Three Cornered Hat" even enjoyed a renewed lease of life a couple of years ago, when a new translation of it was issued and met with unexpectedly popular success. Mr. Bell, however, rightly stresses the prime importance of Galdós in this group. He is indubitably "the father" of modern Spanish fiction.

The strictly "modern" period is, of course, that which began with the generation of 1898. Here again America has been well served by the translators, for, of the novelists, dramatists and essayists singled out for detailed discussion by Mr. Bell, the following are available in English: Pío Baroja, Ramón del Valle-Inclán, Ramón Pérez de Ayala, Ricardo León, Blasco Ibáñez, Gabriel Miró, Miguel de Unamuno, Jacinto Benavente, Azorín, Martínez Sierra, and Concha Espina. It is true that only the worst of these, to wit, Blasco Ibáñez, has really captured the affections of the American public, but the Spaniards cannot say that a serious effort has not been made to introduce their best literature into North America. Mr. Bell is more tender towards Blasco Ibáñez than most authoritative critics, but he does admit that "La Barraca" and "Cañas y Barro" — books with no vogue in English — are his best work.

The two most undeservedly neglected writers, Pérez de Ayala and Pío Baroja, however, are singled out for special praise, and if Mr. Bell succeeds in sending American readers to the translations of these novelists he will not have lived in vain. Such, indeed, should be the general effect of Mr.

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Bell's history, for he has written with learning and infectious enthusiasm a book which has more than the advantage of being the first in the field.

Contemporary Spanish Literature. By Aubrey F. G. Bell. Alfred A. Knopf.

THE DEVOTION OF JOHN G. NEIHARDT

By Frank Luther Mott

IN a little village out in the Ozarks, John G. Neihardt is engaged in writing an epic cycle of the American frontier. The task is one calling for the highest powers; yet Neihardt is a very unostentatious sort of man, a lover of informality, disciple of the simple and the real. Short in stature, he would not be noticed in a crowd; but let him take off his slouch hat and look you in the eyes, and you realize he is Somebody. Another Zacchean, David Lloyd George, once said that in Wales, where he came from, they measure a man's height from his ears up. That is the way to measure John Neihardt, for he has a fine brow: he has the head of a thinker. After that first square look at him, you never lose the impression that he is an intellectual; but as you talk with him you perceive that he is also the man of action, of virility. And when you begin to realize the degree to which these two sets of characteristics are developed, you have come under the spell of an unusual personality.

It was an unusual thing Mr. Neihardt did eleven years ago when he gave up writing the only kind of poetry that appears to have much chance of becoming popular in this age of periodicals — the short lyric. He had reached a high and certain place as a lyricist, but he has written no lyrics for eleven years now. His short stories, too, were bringing him easy returns, with a constant demand from the publishers, but he left off doing short stories and lyrics at the same time. He gave up these literary forms because he had decided he would have no time for them if he was to fulfill his destiny. Destiny is not too strong a word; Mr. Neihardt's sense of his purpose in the world was so strong that he decided with perfect definiteness to devote his life to one object — the writing of an epic cycle founded on the early pioneering of the west. He has given himself over to his purpose with the simple directness of religious devotion. He has made no heroics about his sacrifice of the ways that seemed to lie smooth and easy before him. It is true that he had worked very hard for the success he had won, that he had no resources to carry his growing family over the lean years, and that the eventual rewards in the new *métier* were problematical. These facts, however, weighed little with him; he had seen the vision, or heard the voice, or received whatever message is communicated to the soul of a devotee.

This, probably, is too hifalutin. Mr. Neihardt himself expresses it more simply: "Twenty-eight years ago", he wrote in December, 1920, "I began to write verse. I had the epic cycle of the west in mind for some years before I felt that I had developed sufficiently to undertake the task. Seven years ago I felt that I had at last completed my apprenticeship and might well begin the work with which I hope to justify the use of what society has unconsciously given me. My scheme is a large one and will require the best of me for at least fifteen years more. I will be getting a bit old when the task is finished. What shall I 'get out of it', to use the current phrase in its usual sordid sense? Hard work, days and

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nights of trying strain, brief moments of glory, some acclaim in the end perhaps, and my living. . . . The simple fact is that I am not working for myself and am not trying to 'get' anything. I have undertaken to preserve a great heroic race mood which might otherwise be lost. Someone must do this, and I seem to be the one."

This note of impersonalism is the prevailing idea in his philosophy of life. He regards himself as "a momentary whorl in the stream of the racial consciousness". This belief is at least a part of the reason for such a devotion to his task as seems veritably religious; for this whorl has a function, and its function is its excuse for existence.

But John Neihardt is a man before he is either a poet or a philosopher. Almost any summer afternoon you may find him hoeing in his garden. If you seek him out between the rows of beans and onions, you will find him ready to discuss problems of life and letters with you; but let persons of the "simple bungalow type" upon whom President Wilson once animadverted, i.e., those who have no upper story — let them beware, for Mr. Neihardt has a towering contempt for people without ideas. With others he proves a good companion, a *raconteur*, a hunter and fisherman, a good fellow.

Signs of the growing success of his big work begin to multiply. Three of the six poems are now in print. The organization of Neihardt clubs in New England, the middle west, and the Pacific west is a remarkable manifestation of the enthusiasm of that growing body of admirers who call themselves Neihardtians. "The Song of Hugh Glass" and "The Song of Three Friends" have happily supplanted "The Lady of the Lake" and "Evangeline" in many schools, especially in the middle west. The new poem in the cycle, "The Song of the Indian Wars", has been rather generally received as the greatest work Mr. Neihardt has yet done. His "Collected Poems" are being brought out by his publishers this fall.

In the new poem, the history of the Indian wars in the west during the decade following the Civil War is detailed in verse which is always competent and sometimes brilliant and powerful. The moods of the times — in the Indian village, in the soldiers' camp, and in the pioneer's cabin — are poignantly distinct; and the human note, as always in Neihardt's work, rises clear and plain. Here is the greatest Indian fighting, without a doubt, in American poetry, as well as veridic and memorable Indian oratory, rough and desperate heroism of troopers, and pictures of the plains in all seasons of the year. The story of the death of Crazy Horse, with which the poem ends, is a very effective narrative poem by itself.

The case of John G. Neihardt, doing a big task so well and with so much clear sighted idealism, gives one about as much pride in America and hope for American literature as anything else on the horizon.

The Song of the Indian Wars. By John G. Neihardt. Macmillan Company.

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IN BRIEF REVIEW

BACKSTAIRS gossip has come to have an acknowledged place in the publishing world. All lists have at least one of this type of book. As such works go, "The Queen of Cooks and Some Kings" (Boni, Liveright) is decidedly not of the worst. It has the advantage, for one thing, of being largely true; for another, of being written in one of the most delightful styles known: that of conversation. Mrs. Lewis merely told all about herself and her life to Miss Lawton and a stenographer, and the verbatim result is this book. Like all of its type, it is singularly useless, but it has the real advantage of adding another vital character to the small list of the world's literary individualists. Mrs. Lewis herself will be what will make the book sell — not her vapid revelations of how she shooed Winston (Copper Top) Churchill from the kitchen, or how a New York Jew was thrown into the gutter for not taking off his hat when he spoke to her. Not that these incidents do not have their charm! But the delightful and valuable thing in the book is the revelation of Mrs. Lewis herself: a woman of great personal magnetism, it seems, yet of consummate impudence and plenty of kitchen vulgarity. The faults of the book are many. Inveterate repetition, vapid moralizing, absolute formlessness in narrative: these are merely a few of the greater of them. Some would consider Mrs. Lewis's egotism a fault. I, however, think it delightful. And it is the force and vitality of herself which makes this book — or at least the first half of it — well worth reading (if you have any time to waste!). The second part adds nothing of value to the picture. The book is well illustrated with photographs of royalty, subroyalty, actors, statesmen, and Mrs. Rosa Lewis.

There is something earthy and artless in Scots vernacular poetry, a quality that appears all too seldom in our own native verse. Robert Frost and the poets who, consciously or unconsciously, follow in his steps, often attain this pastoral simplicity. But the Scotch seriousness and stoicism is so racially set that no other national poetry can ever quite approach its peculiar idiom. And one must be a Scot to love this rich and rumbling dialect, to feel its burr and appreciate the quaint localisms that distinguish it. In an excellent and scholarly introduction to "The Northern Muse" (Houghton Mifflin) John Buchan, compiler of this anthology of Scots vernacular poems, describes their development, pointing out that neither Burns nor other great Scots bards wrote in the living speech of their countrymen, but used an exotic combination of expressions. It is this fact which makes the appreciation of Scots poetry largely a literary matter. In an effort to bring together the many variations of dialect, mood, and manner, Mr. Buchan has selected from many sources poems from ancient to modern times. At the end of the book a copious commentary elucidates for the reader many unusual words and phrases. Though we are often bored by an anthologist's habit of classifying poems under such heads as "Nature", "Youth and Spring", etc., we cannot help liking some of the titles that this particular compiler chooses. We have

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a notion that even the poets themselves would not object to having their pieces classified under "Lacrimæ Rerum", "Friendly Beasts", "Enchantments", and "The Human Comedy".

The habit of writing to newspapers is not something peculiar to our day; it was a popular practice also during the Revolutionary period. Particularly was it true of American colonists and Englishmen temporarily sojourning in the States, and certain English newspapers and periodicals frequently printed these communications "in large type". Margaret Wheeler Willard (Houghton Mifflin) has been through the files of these British journals and offers in "Letters on the American Revolution, 1774–1776" a judicious selection which is both interesting and informative. She has also exhumed illuminating bits of private correspondence which throw light on the sentiment that prevailed in America during those critical days. To the publishers, Houghton Mifflin Company, belongs credit for the production of one of the most artistic volumes we have seen in many a day.

In these days of repression of educational honesty, why is such a book as "Horace and His Art of Enjoyment" proffered to tempt us? Even E. P. Dutton and Company and Elizabeth Hazelton Haight, professor of Latin in Vassar College, the two conspirators affording us this unwelcome book, must know by this time that acquaintance with the ancient world is become heretical, must admit the unorthodoxy of everything now not purely vocational in our present jazz world of higher culture — and should have resisted this unusual blandishment of the Devil. What boots it that a once loved poet-philosopher here lives again, even dubiously in somewhat stilted gear; that Roman life once more passes here in pageantry; that one Sabine farm calls *Carpe diem* again? Surely it is wrong nowadays to be of the Cyrenaics, the Cynics, the Academics, Peripatetics, the Stoics, or the Epicureans! Out with 'em all, and be a Fundamentalist, and a Goose-Stepper — in any event, a Lock-Stepper!

Mrs. Eliza Fay, whose "Original Letters from India, 1779–1815" (Harcourt, Brace) are now published for the first time outside of that mysterious state, with introductory and terminal notes by E. M. Forster, must have been a most extraordinary character. Her letters, which are really an autobiography, describe her experience with the "pagans" not only in India, but in Egypt as well; her viewpoints are unforgettable, likewise her style. She is tremendously alive, even today, through the vitality of her writings, always personal, always pointed. Incidentally, she was a prisoner of the famous Hyder Ally, against whom the English waged war; yet while the letters describing her experiences are of considerable value historically, the main interest lies in the very human person, Eliza Fay, who triumphed over difficulties, and told the world what she thought.

The reputation of George Saintsbury as learned and urbane critic is already well established. The fourth volume of his "Collected Essays and Papers, 1875–1923" (Dutton), which contains those on French literature, merely reaffirms, therefore, his breadth of scholarship and his peculiar insight into the Gallic mind. His tribute to Gautier is appropriate for himself: "one of the rare critics who . . . submit themselves to the effects of art; who

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are neither incapable of receiving impressions, nor rebellious to them, nor driven to feign them, nor incompetent to express what they have felt." With the exception of the judgment of Anatole France (for which full apology is made in the final essay) Professor Saintsbury's sprightly criticism stands as sound as it did when much of it was written, fifty years ago.

To the Chipman Law Publishing Company of Brookline, Boston, scholars everywhere owe a lasting debt of gratitude for Judge John Marshall Gest's new translation of "The Old Yellow Book", source of Browning's "The Ring and the Book", even though this is not the first rendition from the Latin of "the true story of the sordid crimes of elopement and murder, trials and torture" centring around the fair Roman girl-bride Pompilia who ere 1698 bloomed, like Heine's floweret, "so sweet and true and pure and beautiful". Lawyers in particular will be glad to study Judge Gest's interpretations — not hitherto stressed — relative to the law, the lawyers, and the legal procedure generally in effect in Italy at the time of this, probably the world's most famous secular trial, "including particularly the torture which was such an important part of it". Translations for the first time citing authorities, "the actual facts of the case as they appear in the record", work based on a private library's collection of hundreds of volumes covering mediæval and post-mediæval Continental law — these testify to the cold facts themselves of Judge Gest's great contribution here. Likewise do his voluminous notes, fine glossary, painstaking index, and careful and enthralling translations of the many sides of this great story of so many Solons so brilliantly presented.

When Leigh Hunt wrote, "A girl is the sweetest God ever made", he might have been thinking of Dora Wordsworth, of whose charmed circle he was a member. Certainly F. V. Morley in "Dora Wordsworth Her Book" (Houghton Mifflin) paints a fascinating picture of the poet's daughter. The volume at hand contains an ably written introduction by Mr. Morley in which he presents us to William Wordsworth and his family at their home at Rydal Mount. The remainder of the book is taken up with reprints of, and comments on, Dora's famous diary. Famous, because in it are found the signatures of Coleridge, Charles and Mary Lamb, Sir Walter Scott, Leigh Hunt, Robert Southey, Alfred Tennyson, and others. It is a most delightful book written simply and sincerely, revealing the human side of these illustrious persons. In the drawing room at Rydal Mount or driving over the hills behind Naso (the pony) one meets informally some of the arresting figures in the literary world of the nineteenth century.

The reprint of Witter Bynner's "Young Harvard" (Knopf) is to be welcomed as containing the earliest and yet mature accomplishment of one of the more notable of living American poets. In the title poem and the accompanying lyrics, Mr. Bynner displays that same singing quality, that same lightness of touch and mastery of technique, which distinguishes the best of his later work. There are patches, indeed, that are not up to the level of his highest attainment, but such patches are to be found even amid the most notable work of almost all poets. Certainly, there is sufficient of enduring merit to make the book as worthy of attention today as when it first appeared some eighteen years ago.

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The Right Honorable H. A. L. Fisher, M.P., is one of the few historians who distinguish the dead past from the living past. Believing also that the average reader of today finds little value in the usual historical treatise, the data offered by encyclopædias, or in unrelated magazine or newspaper articles, he has undertaken the editorship of a new series, "The Modern World" (Scribner) which is to treat each nation "not as it was a hundred years ago, or even as it was twenty years ago, but as it is now with all the modifying experiences and happenings of the war become part of its system". While chief emphasis is on the present, the editor does not overlook those fragments of ancient experience which continue to influence the minds and shape the actions of men. Stephen Gwynn's "Ireland" and G. P. Gooch's "Germany" inaugurate the series, with nine volumes in preparation. In the German volume one finds a strict adherence to chronology, and the purely historical is stressed throughout, while the Irish study is largely sociological, inasmuch as the authors have not been hampered through limitations imposed upon books in series. Each has approached his task independently, reverencing only the demands of his subject. The reader will observe that the contrast shown in these two volumes is strikingly paralleled in the actual contrast presented by the two countries, Ireland and Germany.

There is a cheerful inanity about the latter day Russian artists. One pictures them, somehow, with the concentrated look, the pencil held close to the point, and the curling tongue edging the lower lip; in their grotesque energy they are surprisingly juvenile. Thus, when Louis Lozowick in "Modern Russian Art," (Société Anonyme) makes eloquent gestures, divides these little boys into groups, and begs to point out a Suprematist here, a Constructivist there, the tendency is to snicker. It may be art; who, at any rate, can say what is art? But it is difficult to find sincerity in a thing which resembles what one sees of the horizon when one is upside down — with a milk bottle, a pack of playing cards, and an oboe thrown in. It smells of persons who claim they can draw as well with the left as the right hand. Talk of Dimensions is rather stupid when the eye falls only upon billingsgates.

Such men as Jacob Zeitlin and P. P. Howe deserve our thanks for their efforts in behalf of that brilliant bad man of the early last century, good old cuss-'em-out William Hazlitt. Mr. Howe's thirty-three "New Writings by William Hazlitt" (Dial) offer additional evidence which way the winds blew of Hazlitt's day. The pen which pricked "epithets of no qualified abuse" through tender British hides; which tattooed many an unwilling countess; summarized a lot of Lord North in "his Toryism, his wit, and his love of sleep"; "traced" a certain scholar of its day "like the mole, only by the quantity of matter he has thrown up, and which Scotch professors carry off in lofty succession, to manure their dry brains and barren quartos with"; impinged "the finery, the glare, the dress or undress, the naked charm, the added ornament" of flapper and dowager of then — this pen, like Jeffrey's, spoke "sharply and pleasantly". Many a favorite posture was annulled by this devil's wit. As Southey's: "It is odd that a man should be delighted with himself for being always in the right, and so angry at others for leaving him this preeminence by being sometimes in the wrong."

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In "The Best News Stories of 1924" (Small, Maynard), Joseph Anthony and Woodman Morrison have selected a wide variety from among some three thousand submitted to them. They are classed under "Human Interest Stories", "Feature Stories", "Short Stories", "Interviews and Personality Stories", "Foreign Correspondence", and "Straight Reporting". Some readers might wish that a larger proportion of humorous contributions had been included, but no one could cavil at the high standard of the collection. Nor could the general reader quarrel with the range of choice offered him. More discerning minds will appreciate the work of foreign correspondents, such as Paul Scott Mowrer, John L. Balderton, and Walter Duranty, but there is not an uninteresting story in the book. "The Feud Code of Herrin", "The Uninvited Guests", "The Bobbed Haired Bandit", and "The Prince's Visit" provide specially admirable examples of modern journalistic skill.

Every season or two, university professors of English aspire to fame and fortune. The latest are Doctors George William McClelland and Albert C. Baugh of the University of Pennsylvania, offering "Century Types of English Literature" (Century) to "fill . . . a long felt want" — more complete selections for our sophomore survey courses. But in our opinion these collaborators haven't "made good" a compilation even for what we call "trade schools". This, despite their contention that for seven years their victims in the University of Pennsylvania have proved the workableness of this text! Their introductions to individual authors but gabble generalizations, and are easily the worst we have ever read. Milestones of English literature everywhere are supposed to topple into oblivion at the beck and nod of these devotees of barren stretches of "The Faerie Queene", "Paradise Lost", and Dryden. Kipling, Dunsany, and Beerbohm are dragged in in an eleventh hour attempt to bring this wobbly concoction up to "date", "snuff", and "jazz" for teachers of English whose horizons stopped with what's in this utilitarian book.

In his latest collection of poems, "Nor Youth Nor Age" (Vinal), Harold Vinal makes himself too unmistakably a disciple of Edwin Arlington Robinson and Robert Frost. The individual tendencies of his earlier work are less obvious than one might desire; he no longer sings of islands and the sea, but seems largely given to an imitation of contemporaries which (while common nowadays) is much less to be condoned than imitation of the classics. There is skilful portraiture in some of Mr. Vinal's poems, there is occasional cleverness and more than one deft trick of technique; but there is little inspiration, little spontaneity, little originality, little passion, and little music — in short, his work is too much a cerebral product, and has but few of those ingredients that go to make the finest poetry.

One wonders if the popularity of the Wilson-Page-House correspondence is in any way responsible for the publication of "Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge" (Scribner). One wonders also whether the books will appeal to a similar or to a widely dissimilar public. The letters which passed between Roosevelt and Lodge from 1884 to 1918 furnish an excellent commentary on the fortunes of the Republican Party during this period and reveal the aspirations of the writers

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in a manner which dispenses with the biographer. Collected and edited by Mr. Lodge, the letters begin with the Cleveland-Blaine campaign and run with surprising regularity down to Roosevelt's grand tour of 1910. After that, they are scattered and of little consequence. The inclusion is most fortunate, however, of the correspondence in 1917 with Secretary Baker in regard to Colonel Roosevelt's frustrated plan to raise a division for foreign service.

"Hill Fragments" by Madeline Mason-Manheim (Brentano) is a volume of verse that contains many of the elements of fine poetry. The author writes with imagination and individuality; she exhibits a keen responsiveness to beauty and a lyrical poignancy and passion that are rare; she can shape words into natural albeit occasionally crude rhythms. And yet, when all is said, she gives an impression of ragged edges and incompleteness, as though she had seized upon the subject matter of poetry without kneading it perfectly into poetic form. Perhaps, as Arthur Symons suggests in the introduction, the trouble is that the author does without rhyme " in measures that seem to demand it", and thereby suffers from the lack of one of the beauties of poetry, and one of the "inherent beauties". None the less, Miss Mason-Manheim has produced work far above the average of *vers libre* attainment, work occasionally of real impressiveness and appeal.

Advocates of women's rights must be envious when they read of the Elizabethan age. "Society Women of Shakespeare's Time" by Violet A. Wilson (Dutton) makes it seem that "Rights for Men" would then have been a popular cause. Elizabeth furnished an example of the potentiality of her sex which the women of the court were not slow to follow. Here we have Lady Russell, Lady Warwick, Penelope Rich, and many others who wielded influence in political life. One feels, after reading Miss Wilson's fascinating account of them, that perhaps, if our historians had not all been male, one would have to search dusty archives for the names of Sir Walter Raleigh, Robert Cecil, et al.

Dr. George G. Scott's "Science of Biology" (Crowell) is a very competent textbook. As such it introduces the reader to biology as a science or a group of scienes; to protoplasm, the cell, the plants, the animals and man; and to such general topics as heredity, adaptation and evolution.

A few years ago Irvin S. Cobb fashioned a simile anent the privacy of a goldfish which seems to have found a permanent place in American humor. From "Here Comes the Bride — and so forth" (Doran) we cull a passage to go with it. "Uncle Henry is the sort of person who will leave home on a cut-rate excursion, carrying his cooked provender tied up in a shoe box, and return after three days, bringing the box and the string back with him." Here are seventeen sketches, treating of sleeping cars, the German army, and points between with an understanding, broad humor that is never (well, hardly ever) forced.

The Reverend Lynn Harold Hough writes with a polished and agreeable eloquence in his collection of brief essays, "The Lion in His Den" (Association Press), on a miscellany of literary and theological subjects. Great churchmen, past and contemporary, their work, their gifts, and their parts in

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the spiritual life of their times, provide most of the material for these discussions between the author and the "Lion". But variety is lent to the text by inclusion there of such non-cleric figures of the writing world as H. G. Wells, Stuart P. Sherman, Dorothy Canfield, and John Drinkwater, who are appraised with a keen and lively understanding. Even the "raw vulgarity of Mr. Mencken" is not overlooked.

In three slim volumes on Rembrandt, Michael Angelo, Chardin and Vigée-Lebrun, E. V. Lucas delivers himself of what is to be a series of such books. They will be grouped under the common title, "Little Books on Great Masters" (Doran). The official business of Mr. Lucas seems always to have been explaining; his has been a personality which craved to take one upon its knee and reveal things pleasant and sunny. His text here is what it always is: lucid, gently concise, and leisurely — no small a task in little books which run not over thirteen pages. They are fleetingly instructive, most attractively bound in simple, solid color boards, and supplemented with excellent illustrations; a sort of vest pocket guide and museum rolled into one.

In "Walt Whitman: A Study and a Selection" (Lippincott) Gerald Bullett has performed both parts of the job with care and understanding. His study, which prefaces the selection from Whitman's poems, is in part biographical and in part critical. It makes no point of going into detail either critically or biographically, but in contrast to the effusive rhapsodies generally sung to Whitman, it has the distinction of taking a cool and detached point of view toward the poet and his work. Mr. Bullett gives abundant praise where it is due, but makes no effort to hide or condone Whitman's weaknesses and imperfections. The selection of twelve poems that follows Mr. Bullett's study cannot be quarreled with for what it includes, only perhaps for one or two things which it omits. But if everything fine of Whitman's is not included, everything that has been included is fine; and such selectiveness performs for both Walt and the reader a splendid service.

Writing from his professional experience of forty years, J. A. Spender, author of "The Public Life" (Stokes), the well known English political journalist, traces the growth of modern parliamentary government from the end of the eighteenth century to the present day. He lays stress upon individual statesmen of such commanding stature as Peel, Gladstone, Disraeli, Palmerston, and Lloyd George of his own country; Cleveland, Roosevelt, and Wilson of ours; while at lesser length he appraises the political careers of leading European figures during the world war and, in order to include Bismarck, of a slightly earlier period. Brilliantly written, a solid achievement of liberal and scholarly thought, the work is a profoundly enlightening study of modern political evolution.

Biography is becoming increasingly a matter of personalities. By that test — the interest and picturesqueness which attaches to the personality, the literary possibilities inherent in its exploitation — John Donne, pagan poet, eloquent divine, and greatest of the seventeenth century Deans of St. Paul's, cries aloud for treatment in the new mode. He has received it from Hugh I'Anson Fausset, whose "John Donne" (Harcourt, Brace) is subtitled "a study in discord". There you have

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the clue to the book. For, without discarding the monumental labors of Edmund Gosse on this subject, Mr. Fausset devotes himself lovingly to the age old psychological problem of the personality divided against itself. Spirituality and carnality are sometimes both present in high degree in men of mark, and it is sometimes their struggle which makes men great saints or great rogues. "It was Donne's great and tragic destiny", says Mr. Fausset in taking leave of Donne, "to experience the worst agonies of that inconclusive battle, and to bequeath to literature the tale of it."

Dr. Samuel Christian Schmucker, who for many years has been engaged in making science available and intelligible to the layman, has written a story of prehistoric mankind, which he calls "Man's Life on Earth" (Macmillan). In this he describes in ordinary language, and with great skill, the history of man's ancestors which scientists have reconstructed from the fragmentary remains of the creatures and their cultures. More important, perhaps, he shows that the process is not one of mere wild guessing. "To the layman it may seem absurd to build up the body of a man out of a few bones . . . (But) The skullcap tells much of the brain it encased, and this of the intelligence of the creature to which it belonged. In addition, the ridges on the surface of the skull form the line of attachment of muscles, especially of the neck and jaw. The former help to form a good judgment as to the angle at which the head met the body; the latter speak of the direction and strength of the jaw. The character of the jaw is further evidenced by the two teeth, which also tell a part of the story of the food. As for the thigh bone (femur) the smooth surfaces on the ends, where it comes in contact with the hip-socket above and with the shin bone at the knee, help to declare the angle at which the bone was placed, and hence the degree of erectness or of slouch in which the creature customarily stood."

Through the Johns Hopkins Press, Carol Wight of Johns Hopkins University has recently published "Sir Thomas More and Other Verse", a volume dealing with both ancient and modern themes in able and often distinguished verse. The bulk of the book is a blank verse play dealing with the fall and execution of Sir Thomas More. Considerable scholarship, dramatic sense, and poetic vision mark the lines. There are also a number of well turned sonnets, and an excellent translation of Sully-Prudhomme's "The Broken Vase". This is a competent and satisfactory book of 116 pages of verse and poetry offered in a dignified and pleasing format. It has about it the flavor of learning and the quiet fire of a well poised personality.

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THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

Compiled by Frank Parker Stockbridge, Life Member of the American Library Association in Cooperation with the Public Libraries of America

"Sumer is i-cumen in", but nobody would guess it from a perusal of the records of the books which the library borrowers are selecting for hot weather reading. The two newcomers in the Monthly Score certainly are not to be classified as "hammock books". Perhaps the return of the "Illiterate Digest", after having been edged out of the score for a month, is a symptom of the traditional craving for light reading in vacation time. And perhaps that tradition is merely a tradition, a memory of a convention that has vanished into the limbo wherein so many other conventions must be sought today, if anywhere.

At any rate, the demand for guides to perfect behavior has subsided. Perhaps, as seems likely, the point of saturation has been reached and there are none left in ignorance of the proper way to order a dinner at the Ritz.

—F. P. S.

FICTION

1.	Arrowsmith	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
2.	The Constant Nymph	*Margaret Kennedy*	DOUBLEDAY
3.	The Little French Girl	*Anne Douglas Sedgwick*	HOUGHTON
4.	The Green Hat	*Michael Arlen*	DORAN
5.	The White Monkey	*John Galsworthy*	SCRIBNER
6.	Soundings	*A. Hamilton Gibbs*	LITTLE
7.	The Mother's Recompense	*Edith Wharton*	APPLETON
8.	So Big	*Edna Ferber*	DOUBLEDAY
9.	The Peasants*	*Ladislas Reymont*	KNOPF
10.	Barren Ground	*Ellen Glasgow*	DOUBLEDAY
11.	The Carolinian	*Rafael Sabatini*	HOUGHTON
12.	The Thundering Herd	*Zane Grey*	HARPER

GENERAL

1.	Mark Twain's Autobiography	*Samuel L. Clemens*	HARPER
2.	John Keats	*Amy Lowell*	HOUGHTON
3.	Twice Thirty	*Edward W. Bok*	SCRIBNER
4.	The Fruit of the Family Tree	*Albert Edward Wiggam*	BOBBS
5.	Woodrow Wilson	*William Allen White*	HOUGHTON
6.	Ariel: The Life of Shelley	*André Maurois*	APPLETON
7.	The New Decalogue of Science	*Albert Edward Wiggam*	BOBBS
8.	Saint Joan	*George Bernard Shaw*	BRENTANO
9.	Life and Letters of Walter H. Page	*Burton J. Hendrick*	DOUBLEDAY
10.	Life of Abraham Lincoln*	*William E. Barton*	BOBBS
11.	The Illiterate Digest	*Will Rogers*	A. & C. BONI
12.	My Garden of Memory	*Kate Douglas Wiggin*	HOUGHTON

* This title has not before appeared in the Monthly Score.

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THE SEVEN SEAS

The Crown Prince's Book — Still More War Books — Letters of Francis Joseph — A Book About Florence — And One About India — A German on Mexico — Another French Literary Prize.

THE ex-Crown Prince of Germany's new book, "I Seek the Truth", is a belated attempt to disprove the Allies' contention that Germany devoted several decades to preparing for the war. The first part of the book covers the period from the Peace of Frankfurt to the ascension to the throne of William II. With commendable thoroughness the Crown Prince sets out to prove that the policy of Bismarck, far from menacing the world's peace, really deserves credit for having maintained it under very difficult conditions. He cites documents from the files of the Foreign Office to refute the legend of Bismarck's war aims in 1875, and the accusation that Bismarck had intended to use the Schaebele case in 1887 as a pretext for war.

The Crown Prince quotes personal notes of the Emperor William I to prove that the notorious Ems dispatch was not a forgery. It is only to be expected that the author of this book should regard the acquisition of Alsace-Lorraine as an act of historical justice. Moreover, these provinces were inhabited, he declares, by a population which, according to its own representatives at the National Assembly in Bordeaux, was "German to the core".

But not all the exhaustive documentary evidence cited by the Crown Prince will convince an impatient generation that his father, and Bismarck before him, *feared* war while Russia and France *hoped* for it. The Crown Prince is on surer ground when he attacks the ill fated Treaty of Versailles. His book written, as he says, after four years' enforced exile to render a service to his compatriots, certainly does much to deprive the Treaty of any vestige it may still possess of its self-imposed halo of moral justification.

* * * *

The output of war books shows no signs of diminishing. The fifth volume of the "German Official Naval History" (Mittler, Berlin) includes an account of the much discussed battle of Jutland. Its author, Captain Groos, does not treat the battle as an indecisive action (the general opinion of earlier critics) but regards it as a German victory, supporting his contention with casualty statistics which put the British losses at twice those of the Germans. Beyond some severe criticism of British tactics, Captain Groos attempts no survey of the principles of naval strategy as applied at Jutland, and the merit of his book as a contribution of permanent historical value is open to question. Captain Groos is, indeed, a patriot rather than a historian.

Published simultaneously in Germany and Russia, General Daniloff's book, "Russland in Weltkrieg, 1914–15", describes, from the standpoint of the High Command, the operations of the Grand Duke Nicholas, thus filling a gap in the history of the war concerning which the war records of the Soviet Government are silent. In ad-

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dition to his valuable survey of Russian strategy, General Daniloff describes the many difficulties with which the Grand Duke had to contend, especially the disastrous shortage of ammunition in 1915.

The story of Verdun is told in the tenth volume of General Palat's war history (Berger-Levrault, Paris) which will probably prove to be the best of the French histories of the war now being written.

Published in Berlin under the title "Unter Drei Kaiser", the memoirs of Baron Hugo von Reisschach, the last of the ex-Kaiser's court chamberlains, describe Bethmann Hollweg's vain attempt to oppose the arrogance and impetuosity of the German naval authorities. At the historic Cabinet meeting presided over by the Kaiser on January 19, 1917, the "shoot at sight and leave no trace" submarine campaign was decided on.

Bethmann Hollweg protested that it would bring America into the war. "It is *finis Germaniae*" he declared. But Admiral von Holtzendorff retorted, "I shall vouch for it on my word as a naval officer that not a single American shall land on the continent."

* * * *

The Vienna Neue Freie Presse published last autumn a series of letters of the Emperor Francis Joseph I. From Vienna now comes in volume form an amplified collection of these royal letters, "Franz Joseph I in seinen Briefen" (Edited by Dr. Otto Ernst: Rikola Verlag).

Francis Joseph, born in 1830, became Emperor at the age of eighteen — his feeble minded uncle and scarcely less feeble father allowing themselves to be passed over in his favor. At that time, the fall of the unhappy Hapsburg monarchy seemed imminent, although the actual disruption was not to come until seventy years later. Small wonder that, especially in later years, Francis Joseph trusted no one. It is evident from these letters that he understood little of the movements and events of his time. Without imagination, sterile of emotion, and inarticulate in expression, he passed his long reign in the mechanical and conscientious performance of his "duty". Like most monarchs he worked hard. But it must have been a dreary life for a man, intellectually undeveloped, thrust as he was into the position of Emperor. His marriage, too, was frigidly and decorously unhappy, we gather from Dr. Ernst's selection of his letters. The book is intended to give a picture of Francis Joseph's private life and character; and does not pretend to mirror the events of his reign.

* * * *

Many Americans no doubt retain a pleasant recollection of the courtesy and scholarship of Guido Biagi, head of the Laurentian Library in Florence. His death last January deprived Italy of one of her wittiest and most sympathetic writers. Just before the end, he completed a series of Florentine studies, now published by Battistelli in Florence under the title of "Fiorenza Fior Che Sempre Rinnovella".

It is a fascinating book. Obviously inspired by his love for Florence and enthusiastic in exploring its early records, Biagi presents many delightful and intimate pen pictures of social life in Florence from the twelfth to the beginning of the nineteenth century. Some of Biagi's quotations from mediæval manuscripts make quaint reading. Devotees of the cave man school of fiction will possibly appreciate this fourteenth century exhortation to the Florentine merchant:

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Women are always vain and light, so if you have them in the house, never take your eyes off them and keep them under and make them afraid of you.

But the mediaeval chronicler strikes a more human and tolerant note in this passage:

If you have girls at home and young men look at them, as does sometimes happen, don't give way to undue anger against the young men.

In the fourteenth century Florentine women, in spite of severe domestic tradition, had the reputation of being "the best painted women in the world". Their wardrobes were elaborate, too, judging by this description of a garment belonging to one Donna Francesca Albizi:

A black cloth mantle adorned with yellow, with designs of birds, parrots, butterflies and roses white and red, and many other figures red and green, and tents and dragons and trees yellow and black, and other figures of divers colors, and lined with white cloth striped with black and red.

This apparently proved too decorative for the taste of the authorities. They promptly expressed their disapproval by confiscating the offending garment. Modern authorities appear to be scandalized by bathing costumes. *Autres temps, autres moeurs!*

* * * *

Dr. Emil Landenberger, in "Wanderjahre in Mexiko", published by Brockhaus of Leipzig, presents an interesting picture of Mexico past and present. Dr. Landenberger is a well-known traveller and his acquaintance with Central and South America is more than superficial. He sees in Mexico great possibilities as a German colony and emphasizes its many attractions. The most interesting chapters of the book describe native customs, and the bandits and adventurers who, from the author's account, are as active as ever. We are entertained also by some vivid glimpses of the old Mexico. The book is illustrated with excellent photographs and has an attractive wrapper, drawn in colored crayons.

* * * *

An illuminating and deeply interesting book about modern India is Dhan Gopal Mukerji's "My Brother's Face". It invites comparison with the novels of Rabindranath Tagore. In "Gora", it will be remembered, Tagore shows the awakening of India's national consciousness. In "My Brother's Face", its full evolution is revealed. This study of modern India by a Brahmin, making the traditional return home after many years of travel in the west, gives sympathetic expression to the ideas and aspirations of the Indian people.

* * * *

Another French literary prize, the Prix de la Femme de France, has been founded by the Société Parisienne d'Edition. The prize is 6,000 francs and will be awarded alternatively to a man and a woman twice a year for an unpublished prose work.

MICHAEL JOSEPH

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THE GOSSIP SHOP

CHILDREN'S BOOK WEEK, November 8 to 14, we shall celebrate as usual with a "Children's Essay Contest". Please note two things this year when you send in your essays; first, that the essays must be three hundred words long, and not more than eight hundred. Many good essays were ruled out last season because contestants did not regard the rules of the game, and this rule was the one most frequently disregarded. For the ten best essays written by boys or girls fifteen years or under THE BOOKMAN offers ten prizes: first, twenty-five dollars in cash; second, ten dollars' worth of books; and one book each for the other eight. Two of the best essays received before October fifteenth will be published in the Christmas number. The announcement of prize awards and the first and second prize winning essays themselves will be published in the January number. The subject for this year will be, "Taking My Book Friends Sight Seeing". Choose at least ten characters from ten of your favorite books, and take them wherever you wish. If this subject does not please you, write an essay on anything that interests you. The rules of the contest are that contributions must be not less than three hundred or more than eight hundred words in length, must be written in ink on one side of the paper only, must have name, age, and address of the contestant in the upper right hand corner, and be addressed to "Children's Book Week Essay Contest" in care of THE BOOKMAN. The statement of a parent or teacher vouching for the originality of the composition must accompany each paper. Manuscripts must be mailed to reach the BOOKMAN office no later than November 1.

Boyd, to be sure, is not an unusual name; but it is fast winning a unique place in American letters, what with Thomas and James and Ernest—Boyds all—and not, like the Gibbs family (A. Hamilton Gibbs's wife is now writing a novel), at all related. First, one morning, came Thomas Boyd and his beautiful wife, Woodward Boyd, who is also a writer. Boyd has finished a new novel, "Stephen Drummond", which is to be published in the autumn. It is to be hoped that the critics will not be foolish enough to compare it with his magnificent "Through the Wheat", or yet again with "Points of Honor". Boyd's war experience, which left him with physical disabilities, and an unconquerable desire to write bravely of the war, is a definite and a complete thing. His accounts of it should not be confused with the abilities as a writer that he displayed in "The Dark Cloud". The Boyds have taken a house in South Woodstock, Vermont, and now and then drive to New York for a day. They find that by driving all night, they can make it in record time. Yesterday the telephone rang, and it was James Boyd, author of "Drums", at the other end of the wire. He is a southerner, with a North Carolina accent, keen eyes, and a slow, penetrating sense of humor. It is not safe to take any remark of his seriously until you think it over a second, at least. He was on his way to Maine, where he spends the summer. While

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most persons from the south are coming to North Carolina for their vacations, the Boyds seek Maine. Mr. Boyd, whose first novel has made such a definite impression, has been at work on his new book for some months, reading all there is to be read about the Civil War, talking to native North Carolinians, gathering anecdotes. "No soldier was ever sentimental about war," he said, "and I am going to treat the Civil War from the standpoint of the Confederate enlisted man." We then talked of races in America, and the development of various sections of the country from a racial standpoint. Boyd, as you doubtless know, is a Princeton man. He served in the war, and now lives and writes on a huge place in the south. "I am not a good shot", he insists. Knowing nothing of hunting I thought, just because friends of mine who had spent some time with the Boyds last winter told me he was much of a fox hunter, that that sport meant shooting. What an error! Well, herewith it is corrected. On the heels of James Boyd came Henry Beston from Cape Cod, with a finished manuscript of his "The Book of Gallant Vagabonds" under his arm. He stayed only part of two days, and then took a boat for his native haunts. The great city was too much for him.

C. S. Evans, of Heinemann's, London, was here not long ago. More and more I am becoming aware of the fact that it is no longer difficult for me to talk with Englishmen, or perhaps I am simply meeting a different type of Englishman. Mr. Evans, it was, who insisted on the printing of Margaret Kennedy's first book, "The Ladies of Lyndon". Now look at her! "Well", he says, "almost anyone would have known it was a good book" — which is thoroughly false modesty, because

Margaret Kennedy

several people read it and refused to publish it. He has promised actually to finish the article on her, which he began for me some time ago. Frank Swinnerton had told me that Evans was the only person to do a personality sketch of the famous author of "The Constant Nymph", so I have waited patiently. Now he promises to do it on the boat as he returns to England. The Heinemann office in London, I have always been told, is like John Murray's in the old days: it is more like a club than an office, and that's how a publisher's should be. Publishing is a personal matter, and such it should remain, in spite of all that the commercial aspects of literature are doing to destroy this relation. At almost any hour of the day, Evans tells me, you can find someone whom you want to see in the Heinemann office. It was Mr. Evans, too, who published Michael Arlen's first book, "The London Venture". English publishers are not so familiar to these shores this year, it seems to me. Ralph Hodder-Williams is on the ocean

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as I write, and, I believe, it is his first trip to America in some years. His father, Sir Ernest, has been here frequently. The younger Hodder-Williams used to be stationed in Canada; but has now been assisting in the London office of Hodder and Stoughton for several seasons.

Margaret Culkin Banning came to town not long ago, and told me all about the politics of the middle west, or at least something about them. What a fascinating combination that would be, to be a woman writer and a politician at the same time. Her political stories, so far as I know, are the only things of their kind being written, certainly from the woman's angle. Mrs. Banning is the best club woman I ever talked with, and all the others must forgive me that opinion because she is a most exceptional person! She has humor, sanity, and a sense of balance. She does not patronize the great organizations of which she is a part, and believes in them thoroughly, at the same time seeing the little foibles that make them funny to many persons. What organization or what person, for that matter, is without foibles of which it is possible to make fun! Mrs. Banning has just completed a new novel and is at work on more short stories. She works every morning, and tends to politics, her children and her husband's house in the afternoon. Duluth, she says, is a first class place to live. I have always wanted to visit the grain country. I don't think there can be many more beautiful things than a huge wheat field in a slight wind. A small one is beautiful enough; but think of miles on miles of waving wheat. From the west, too, comes George O'Neil, with a new book of poems, by far his best, and he tells me that, after a year abroad, he is planning to spend some time in New York City, and perhaps a few weeks in his home town of St. Louis. In a Ford, from the west, or maybe some other kind of car (which reminds me of that dreadful joke about the feud, which should surely be suppressed) arrived Ramon Guthrie, tall, thin, dark, a poet if there ever was one. Just why more people don't know his poetry is a mystery to me. He was active during the war, and invalided, and now teaches school in Tucson, Arizona. I asked him why he didn't know Harold Bell Wright, who is one of the nicest men in the world, and he said he didn't think Mr. Wright would be interested in a poet school teacher. I told him that was just where he was wrong, and I hope that they will both find it out before the next year is over. Guthrie, who has made an intensive study of the French troubadour poets, is at work on a novel about one of them — Gaussin, I believe. So is C. P. Metour, another teacher, and a maker of exquisite etchings. Curiously enough, Gaussin is the hero of Metour's romance; but he is a different lad altogether, I am told. Mr. Metour is a Frenchman, who teaches his native language at Williams College, and finds the American undergraduate interesting if trying.

Two exquisite sea books come in to damage the peace of mind and set up the desire to rove. The more beautiful is "Adventures by Sea from Art of Old Time" by Basil Lubbock, with a preface by John Masefield. There are hundreds of fascinating prints here: pirates and Indians, ships with decks awash, and dignified little ships standing quite silent and ancient alongside curly islands that only the hand of an engraver could render. Masefield's preface is excellent, also his "Lines on Sea Adventure" which open the vol-

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ume. I should like to quote the last part of this poem:

These were the few, the many, with hard hands
Dragged, boated, hoisted, stowed the bargained freight,
Chaffered in all the tongues of foreign lands,
Starved, thirsted, froze, went sleepless, early, late;

Died young, unknown, yet from their countless pains
Wrought this, that still abides, a charted sea,
A world made little wherein conquering brains
Can pass from land to new land, setting free,

Freeing this soul of man that in its cage
Turns, and is weary of it, age by age.

The other, with brightly colored plates, is "The Sea: Its History and Romance" by Frank C. Bowen, and this volume also is heartily recommended. I should like to see a collection of all these beautiful sea books that are being issued. I wonder if volumes so entrancing are published in the name of any other god than this old devil sea.

Fannie Hurst gave a tea for Nellie Revell several weeks ago. Here was Daniel Frohman, as tall and debonair as always, and a charming daughter of the late Mr. Barrett, the actor; and Irvin Cobb and Ruth Bryan Owen. Mr. Cobb and Mrs. Owen were busily exchanging lecture anecdotes. Mrs. Owen says that she is pursued by cats, that just as she is about to make a dramatic point, a cat is sure to walk on the stage and send her audience into hysterics. She claims that one black and white cat pursued her all through the middle west. She avers that in desperation she threw it out the window one night, only to find it walking down the aisle to greet her as she came on the stage. Mr. Cobb says that the best introduction he ever had was by a man who said, "I heard Mr. Cobb's eloquent talk last night at another town, and this is what he said" — whereupon the man talked forty minutes, gave all of Mr. Cobb's points and jokes, and left the humorist adrift in a sea of necessity, i.e., necessity of giving a new speech on the spur of the moment. Miss Hurst, who had just completed her new novel and was wondering where to spend the summer, showed me a present she had just received from Rebecca West. It was a blue glass fish, of oriental design, and quite the most unusual trinket I have ever beheld. Speaking of trinkets, do you ever read Kenelm Digby's column in the New York "Evening Post" these days? Trinket is the columnist's baby. What with H. 3d, Heywood Broun and Ruth Hale's child, and all these other babes, it behooves one who writes gossip to look about for aid. Possibly a baby-farm adoption would be in order. Miss Revell, I had never met before. She is a brave, gay lady who is hard at work now on a novel, among other things. Nora Bayes was there, too, saying she had a "new figure". There seemed to be only one reply to that: "Why a new one? It was always well enough!" or something even more flattering than that. You never can tell just how flattering you dare be to these ladies of the theatre, can you?

Book lists of one sort or another often cross my desk. Many of them are exceedingly valuable to anyone interested in the careful selection of reading matter. The American Library Association pamphlet on "Adult Education" is a good one; so too are several of those compiled by Jacqueline Overton of the Westbury, Long Island, Children's Library. Her latest one, "Gardens, Birds and Flowers", is

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attractively printed and most suggestive. Many of the bookshops issue engaging lists and catalogues of one sort or another. The Hutzler Bookshop in Baltimore sent me an interesting one a while ago, and "Book Notes from Beach's Bookshop" is always worthwhile. Mr. Beach himself has a habit of writing stimulating editorials, and he has many famous contributors. In a recent issue of his notes he chides publishers for overpraising their own novels. Every novel is "the greatest novel I ever published", which is easy to understand from the publisher's angle but, as Mr. Beach points out, probably, in the long run, bad policy.

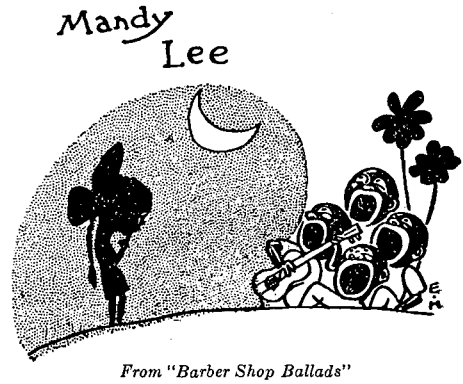
The publishers blurb their books so strongly that the effort brings a diminishing return. Most of the novels published are "great novels"! James Stephens, who is a living genius, told me that we didn't have a great writer in America. I mentioned James Branch Cabell and Sherwood Anderson. He shrugged his shoulders. And yet he says the majority of novels displayed in English bookstores are written by Americans — mostly by the Zane Greys.

"Barber Shop Ballads" is undoubtedly a greater masculine book than Webster's Poker Book. It is called "A Book of Close Harmony, Edited by Sigmund Spaeth, Illustrated by Ellison Hoover, Foreword by Ring Lardner". Including two phonograph records, it makes the perfect guide for the male quartette. With words and music there are such masterpieces as "Mandy Lee", "Some Folks Say", and "Heidelberg Stein Song". If you do not like singing, keep this book out of the house. It will set all the men to play, and then, where will your peaceful evenings be, what with the radio and all that! As usual, Ring Lardner is his jovial best. In his introduction he includes a list of punishments, chastisements, and oaths which are considered legal in the case of,

1. A tenor, who, being the only tenor, takes a high tonic instead of a third for his finishing note.

. . . . . .

6. And a girl who sings tenor and says it's alto.



From "Barber Shop Ballads"

It is becoming a little game among those who make such things their little games, to decide what Simon and Schuster's next stunt book willl be. I just thought of one myself this morning. Anyway, although we can all heartily blame them for the Cross Word Puzzle books, we can thank them for the Poker Book and Barber Shop Ballads.

Stella Benson has been in America again. She does not often find her way to these shores. The author of "The Poor Man", "Pipers and a Dancer", etc., is soon to have a new book of travel sketches published. Another novel is nearly completed. Miss Benson, whose prose is crystal clear, who writes with bitterness and strength, admires at least one person in America: Willa Cather, whom she has never met. "Is she a kind person?" Miss Benson asked me. "Of course", was the reply. They are much alike in viewpoint, these two women, although

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in appearance they are at opposite poles. Miss Cather is hearty, strenuous, active; Miss Benson is slender, delicate, pale, with burning blue-gray eyes, and a soft voice. She lives most of the time in a distant province in China, where she says that she sees the same people day in and day out. After a time she hopes that she will be able to spend some months of each year in her native England. Her husband is in the customs service, with his duties keeping him constantly in the Orient. Miss Benson is curiously detached about what happens to her books after she has written them. All she wants is to turn out a good piece of work, and that, it seems to me, is her whole life. The world she finds a place with many beautiful things in it; but a place in which human beings toil and find trouble as well as happiness. The ironies of life are her concern, and she suspects that people are afraid to face the fundamental irony of living. "The Poor Man" was a fine book. If you have never read it, you should do so, and you will find a quiet stern style, acute observation and rich character drawing. One of Miss Benson's staunchest admirers is Christopher Morley who has long believed in her work and written of it. He has his ironical moments, and I imagine you will find several of them in his new book, "Thunder on the Left", which is to appear serially in "Harper's Magazine", a magazine which, by the way, is taking on all sorts of people, and putting new life into what has always been an ably edited publication.

The other day I read advance proofs of Elinor Wylie's "The Venetian Glass Nephew" and my child familiar immediately fell in love with the fragile Rosalba. He wrote, as usual, a foolish verse or two:

LITTLE BOY TO HIS FIRST LOVE — A PORCELAIN FIGURINE

I think that you are beautiful
So gossamer and fine —
I think it would be magical
If I could call you mine.

I'd put you on the mantel clock,
And in your dusky hair
I'd tie a tiny velvet bow,
And let it glimmer there.

And you would sing at seven o'clock,
And you would sing at two —
And only I of all the world
Would know that You were You.

Other juvenile verses come in collected volumes. Dartmouth undergraduates are presented with an introduction by Robert Frost, in the delicate garb of the Mosher Press. In closing his preface, the New England poet says, "No one is asking to see poetry regularized in courses and directed by coaches like sociology and football. But it does seem as if it could be a little more connived at than it is. I for one should be in favor of the colleges setting the expectation of poetry forward a few years (the way the clocks are set forward in May), so as to get the young poets started earlier in the morning before the freshness dries off. Just setting the expectation of poetry forward might be all that was needed to give us our proportioned number of poets to Congressmen." Then there is a neat volume, "Wellesley Verse, 1875–1925" — some fine poets that institution has had —, and "Amherst Undergraduate Verse", fittingly introduced by David Morton who has been teaching there this year. The poetry is excellent; why not? And why shouldn't they publish it, and why shouldn't people buy it? I'm not sure, though, about wanting as many poets as there are Congressmen, or, perhaps I'm thinking only of the quality of the Congressmen.

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Is it too early for suggestions for next Christmas? Here is one from Felix J. Koch of Cincinnati. I don't see why it isn't a good one for librarians everywhere:

Down Cincinnati way, the municipal library has employed the pleasant custom of mounting a large Christmas tree in its lobby or foyer each Yuletide season, in order that such of its callers as may be away from home or kin, and drop in during Christmas week to enjoy the season's books, may be greeted with some real Christmas cheer! Heretofore, the Library tree has been tricked out with colored glass balls, wee wooden animals, objects of other familiar sorts. Last Christmas, however, it occurred to one of the library *attachés* that the brightly hued covers with which new books — fiction, especially — are put out by the publishers, to save the real covers from griming and also to attract passers to such books the more, might make admirable, appropriate, novel, and at the same time inexpensive innovations here. The receiving room was directed, therefore, to gather together the most attractive of such covers to the very latest books it might have at hand. A large tree was raised then at the accustomed site in the foyer. Electric lamps were deployed here, there, every otherwhere among the limbs. Long strands of gilt and golden tinsel looped and festooned through the branches. Then, just wherever ornaments of other sorts might have been wired to the tree at other times, covers — all very nearly uniform in size but no two alike in content or hardly so in their colors — were attached. Not only did the tree arrest instant attention and bring all to inspect more minutely than they would have done trees of more usual types, but it brought the books to the attention of the visitors as no other library medium might have hoped to do.

I had luncheon yesterday with an editor whom I've always wanted to meet, and whom I found quite as sane and as attractive as I had expected. Gertrude Lane of "The Woman's Home Companion" has been editing that excellent publication for something like twenty years. She is wise in the ways of authors, and she likes them. Some authors, she says, like to be left alone; others like to talk over their plans with an editor, and the editor's job is to fit into either place. Barton Currie, of "The Ladies' Home Journal", is about to spend several months in Europe. I have quite given up hope of keeping track of the travelers to foreign shores. Edna Ferber has returned and immediately left for Chicago where she will spend six or eight weeks and finish her novel, which is to appear in "The Woman's Home Companion". Dorothy Canfield Fisher's new serial will also appear in that magazine, and Miss Lane assures me that it is a fine book. Miss Ferber tells me that she found the Pyrenees the most delightful mountains she had ever seen, and I parried with the fact that she has never been to Vermont. Not long ago, a lady wrote me that she got very tired of hearing about Vermont in the Gossip Shop. It makes no difference to me. I get tired of hearing about H. 3d in Heywood Broun's column, and I get tired of hearing about the Trinket in Kenelm Digby's column, and only a little tired of Miss Hepplethwaite in Frank Sullivan's column, and never tired of Archy in Don Marquis's column; so if columnists must have children, secretaries, or the like, why not allow the Gossip Shop Vermont and his Fashion Editor? Boys must have some play time. As a matter of fact, I'm leaving for Vermont tonight, and I expect to see a lot of mountains and a few authors, among them Messrs. Frost, Moody, Boyd and Montross; Mmes. Boyd, Montross, Canfield, etc. The etc. depends partly on luck. The mountains never depend on luck. They are always there. Long quiet Mansfield, rugged Killington, sharp Camel's Hump, and along them "The Long Trail", with its cool overhanging branches, its flowers, and its tall straight pines. Tired of Vermont? Some day I'm going to tramp the whole 250 miles of the Trail.

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In the fastnesses of Oregon, Vachel Lindsay, the poet, continues to dream his dreams of singing choirs and swinging incense burners. He is undoubtedly a lineal descendant of William Blake's, with his elaborate mysticism, his habit of sending wildly illustrated broadsides to his friends, and his qualities of mental abstraction. His drawings, by the way, have a large measure of beauty. He has a sense of the rhythm of line. Sometimes it is difficult to understand just what it is he is trying to illustrate; but if you will pick up "The Golden Book of Springfield" you will see what I mean, I think. Within the past week, there has arrived another one of his privately printed and distributed books. What a companionable thing this private printing of books is! From Mr. Spingarn comes every now and then one of the beautifully printed Troutbeck series. From Lindsay arrive astounding and magical affairs, almost like the pronunciamento of some deity. This latest effort is called "The Village Magazine". It contains humor, satire, fantasy and some of Lindsay's best work. To the casual observer, it will always seem to be the book of a mad man; but it is far from that, it is the book of a man who is a poet, and who sees with remarkable vision beneath the surface of America; who is a child in many ways, and plays with lines and words, and little jokes, much as a child does. In this book is Vachel Lindsay, the author of such great poems as "The Chinese Nightingale", "General Booth Enters Heaven", "The Congo" and many others; poems that will live as long as our literature endures. There are such masterpieces included here, for example, as "On Reading Omar Khayyam During an Anti-Saloon Campaign in Central Illinois". Two of the loveliest things here are "The Cornfields", and "The Illinois Village". I am going to quote the former, but first, let me remark that Vachel is now married, or at least it seems to me someone told me so.

THE CORNFIELDS

The cornfields rise above mankind
Lifting white torches to the blue
Each season not ashamed to be
Magnificently decked for you.

What right have you to call them yours
And in brute lust of riches burn
Without some radiant penance wrought
Some beautiful, devout return.

Vachel Lindsay

To Connecticut and the coolth of Long Island Sound for the glorious Fourth of July, and there encountered many magazine editors, and assistant editors and associate editors. There was also an evening party in Carl Brandt's barn (Zelma's, too, I suppose). One must be so careful in all these descriptions. And the famous literary agent showed me his old fashioned farmhouse, which is the sort of New England made over farmhouse that fills up a corner of my dreams. It was an excellent barn dance, with refreshments under the trees, and young authoresses fittingly clad, including

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Elinor Wylie and Ruth Hale. Sewell Haggard of the Famous Players was there, B. W. Huebsch and his wife, the Murdock Pembertons, Elsie McKeogh of "McClure's" and her husband, now, among other things, editor of the Cosmopolitan Book Corporation. There was also a young lady from Philadelphia with bobbed gray hair. Her name sounded as though she edited "The Little Review", but I guess she doesn't. It was, at any rate, a good party, as, indeed, are all those given by the Brandts: husband, wife, and excellent brother, Erd by name. The fireworks this year disturbed me. They seem to become more and more spectacular each year; but these bomb arrangements that have taken the place of sky-rockets are most disturbing. Arthur McKeogh didn't seem to mind them; but then, he got used to being under fire during the war. I have always wondered why McKeogh doesn't write a war book. He could do an excellent one. His stories of war experiences published during and after the conflict were fine. Some publisher should force him into print, for there is a growing market for this sort of thing, and in my opinion it will be a continuing one. Webb Waldron, too, was at the above mentioned party. He says that some day soon he will have a new novel. I almost forgot Lucien Cary, who is one of the short story writers who should be forced into writing long fiction, and Dick Connell returned from Paris and looking younger and milder eyed than ever. Why is it that all the humorists have such an innocent look? Corey Ford, looking eighteen and being little more, has just started out with Gene Wright, a poet, to tour the Rockies, or some such remote western place. He had planned a walking trip, but on advice from other persons less tenderfooted in the ways of the west, decided that perhaps horses would be advisable.

Ada Kyle Lynch sends her usual sheaf of California notes:

Perhaps readers of THE BOOKMAN will remember that about two — no, three — years ago, I wrote of hearing Charmion London make her maiden speech at a Jack London luncheon given by the Chamber of Commerce of Petaluma. Its enthusiastic reception must have given her courage, for both in Europe and America, the past few years, she has been giving the public the pleasure of listening to stories of the author's world-accepted work, made even more interesting because of actual knowledge of incidents. Recently there came word from Southern California of the purchase of the entire collection of the Jack London manuscripts by the Henry E. Huntington Foundation at San Marino, where, among manuscripts of many famous authors, the London collection has the distinction of being the only one which is complete.

Honoria Tuomey, recently appointed assistant historian of Alta California for the University at Berkeley, has had her story of "The Bear Flag" broadcast over the radio. Miss Tuomey, whose home at Bodega is near the Pacific at the point made historic by early state history, does her writing while listening to the dashing of the ocean waves. She is now working on a history of Sonoma County, to be published in the near future.

Among the Californians to find place in the 1924 "Anthology of Newspaper Verse" are Frederick M. Steele, Harry Noyes Pratt, Selina Burston, A. B. Schuster, Miriam Allen de Ford, Walter Roesner, Joan Woodward, Beulah May, Louis L. de Jean, Anna Blake Mezquida, C. D. Dam, Lynas Clyde Seal, Ada Kyle Lynch.

The members of the California Writers' Club, at their last meeting, elected Harry Noyes Pratt president of the club. Mr. Pratt for the past two years has been editor of "The Overland Monthly".

Mrs. Josephine Wilson of San Francisco, whose "Who's Who" (no pun intended) lists California writers, is editor of the State Bulletin of the California Federation of Music Clubs.

Mrs. Frederick H. Colburn, president of the San Francisco Branch of the League of American Pen Women, has given the translated tragedy of "Ollantay", a Peruvian epic poem, its first North American reading. The program, which includes excerpts from an opera on the same subject, has been broadcast over radio.

Mrs. Francis M. Wigmore, founder and

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editor of "Child's Garden", the only magazine for children published on the coast, was recommended for the "Pictorial Review's" Achievement Award. Mrs. Wigmore is a member of the Berkeley Branch of the L. A. P. W.

The writer was a guest at the Burbank school in Santa Rosa, with Mr. and Mrs. Burbank and Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Cross (Mr. Cross is city superintendent of schools) and Mrs. Minnie Mills, supervisor of music in the public schools, at the celebration of Mr. Burbank's seventy-sixth birthday. Parts of the program from her book "Luther Burbank, Plant Lover and Citizen, With Musical Numbers" were given. At the grammar school in Healdsburg the entire program was given in costume by the pupils.

Zane Grey has recently completed the building on Catalina Island of a residence which was designed from Hopi Indian plans. It is built on a high plateau of the mountain, whence it will be seen far out at sea. The style is a fitting one, since the island was for many years inhabited entirely by Indians.

Authors are strange creatures: one never knows just what they are going to do. About two weeks ago a young man brought in the first eighth of a novel. It looked like good writing, and he seemed to have a story to tell. "It'll take me about a year to finish it", he said, so I supposed we'd have the completed manuscript in a year or two. Yesterday he arrived with a second MS. "Another book of poetry", he said. I groaned; for good books of poetry are somehow suddenly as plentiful as taxicabs on Forty-second Street. I opened the package. The novel complete! He had written every day all day and all night, and here it was! "Now I'm going home to sleep a week while you read it, and I hope you won't sleep a wink until you do!" With a cook book compiled by their wives, arrive two stalwart gentlemen from the west, well known, both of them, in the marts of trade. "Look at us!" they said. "Aren't we healthy?" The office chorused agreement. "Well, we're the dogs the book was tried out on. You'd better publish it!" It seems, too, that their new game is to guess at dinner what page number each course represents. Cooking books always fascinate me. I like to pore over them while I'm dieting, and try to figure out just what a mixture of flour and molasses would be like. The art of cooking is much neglected in America, or is it? I find myself — and I notice that others in the profession are prone to do likewise — I find myself saying this or that or the other thing is much neglected in America. Is cooking neglected in the south? Probably not. Its art is quite different from the cooking art of France; but it is just as definitely an art. And they know how to make that vulgar thing, the pie, in Vermont, even if they do occasionally have it for breakfast. Hervey Allen's aunt recently invited a group of us for a real southern breakfast. Breakfast! Well, it proved the art of southern cooking, anyway. Hervey, by the way, has been in the south collecting the final material for his "Israfel, the Romance of Edgar Allan Poe" which will appear in the late winter or early spring. He has become much excited over the famous poet.

Edwin Bjorkman writes us that he has been sick but that now he has found a sure cure in golf. This golf business is still worrying. Why does everyone play golf? If it's a sure cure for work, perhaps we'll all take it up one of these days. Another letter comes from Jane Francis Winn of the St. Louis "Globe-Democrat". She says she is "spending the paltry two weeks peculiar to the working classes" at the Seven Hills Farm at Katonah, N. Y. "I am so enjoying this beautiful New York State of yours, and don't wonder that you are all inclined to be lofty." Who's lofty, Miss Winn? And

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whose state is it, anyway? Are there any real New Yorkers? Speaking of New Yorkers, why not mention someone who wasn't, i.e., William Jennings Bryan, whose death came so dramatically at the close of the long fight over an ideal. I was told that he was taken once, for luncheon, to a club which is well known as the bulwark of Republicanism, whereupon he ordered quite calmly pigs' knuckles and sauerkraut. Since it is a favorite dish of our Fashion Editor's I could not be unduly amused. James Livingston Stewart, the author of "The Laughing Buddha", a novel of China, which contains a deal of atmosphere, particularly good in its relation to the opium trade, arrived not long ago with his children from the Orient. The children had never been out of their adopted country, and when taken for a drive through New York City thought they were in Brobdingnag. They asked my friend, who was driving the car, if he had ever been a chauffeur, and made strenuous objections to the Schwab house on Riverside Drive, which they thought didn't look like a house at all and must surely be haunted. What a sensation it must be to arrive in New York after spending a small lifetime in Paris. Imagine the sensations of an eight-year-old as he sees Wall Street for the first time. Rubber-neck would scarcely be the word for it!

From Edward W. Barnard comes a verse. He sent us, too, one on "The Green Hat" which we didn't quite dare to print, not because it was offensive to our jovial friend, Michael, but because it did rather put it over on women in general if not Iris in particular. Here is the poem, though it isn't quite fair to Sinclair Lewis's book, which is the best that very talented gentleman has ever written:

THE ALTRUIST

Jane, dear, please put away my clubs,
I shall not golf this year;
And you're to be the Cerberus
To keep my doorway clear!
For there will be no time to give —
Not even *you*, if you should ask;
The day and night, the heat and cold,
Must find me ever at my task!

The Yellowstone must wait; nor can
We put our plans for winter through.
Be sensible! No tears! I have
A monumental work to do.
When finished — when and IF — 'twill be
A literary monolith!
Lord help me! I've engaged to write
A Glossary for "Arrowsmith"!

In spite of the fact that this magazine has always advocated reading for the pure pleasure of reading, and wondered a bit if "Reading with a Purpose" doesn't perhaps put a little bit more of the study oil over books which, in themselves, are things of beauty and light, we yet welcome the announcement by the American Library Association of a series of courses to be known as reading courses for "Reading with a Purpose". The one already issued is excellent. Eleven more will follow, and they may be purchased single or in quantity. The list follows: Biology, Vernon Kellogg; English Literature, W. N. C. Carlton; Ten Pivotal Figures of History, Ambrose W. Vernon; Some Readings in American Books, Dallas Lore Sharp; Economics, Leon C. Marshall; General Survey, Jesse Lee Bennett; Appreciation of Music, Daniel Gregory Mason; Sociology and Social Problems, Howard W. Odum; The Physical Sciences, E. E. Slosson; Conflicting Ideas in American Government, William Allen White and Walter E. Myer; Psychology, Everett Dean Martin; Philosophy, Alexander Meiklejohn. Since there are many serious souls who will be purposeful, here is their chance. Improvement for pleasure's sake, perhaps.

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